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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 1
PARLIAMENT SPEAKS 3
REFORMING EDUCATION 3
FOR THE COMMON MAN 4
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic 5
LAY. By Sagittarius 6
INDIA: THE TWO VOICES. By John Maynard 6
MORE LIFE. By Y.Y. 7
SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE. By Edward Sackville West 7
THE HAY HARVEST. By Maikov. (Translated by Frances Cornford) 8
THE MOVIES. By Roger Marvell . . . 8
PLAYS AND PICTURES 8
CORRESPONDENCE 8
From Archibald Robertson; R. B. Kemball-Cook; Jean Delin; A. Trystan Edwards; A Country Doctor; Blanche E. C. Dugdale; Rom Landau; Clement Milward; Nicholas Davenport.
Page
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By Raymond Mortimer 11
REVIEWS:
  Shot Down in Flames. By V. S. Pritchett 12
  The Meaning of Freedom. By C. E. M. Joad 12
  The German People. By Kingsley Martin 13
  The Challenge of the Greek. By C. M. Bowra 13
  Reflections on Government. By Harold Laski 14
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 15

FACING THE SPECTRE

DR. GALLUP has just conducted a poll to ascertain what Americans propose to do with Adolf Hitler. The greater number are for hanging him; others would be content to imprison him. In what world of fancy are Americans still living—and how many British keep them company there? This war is nearing the close of its third year, and against a monotonous series of disasters and losses we can set, to redress the balance, only the Abyssinian campaign, the preservation of this island, some impressive bombing raids—and the Red Army's achievements. Our shipping continues to suffer more casualties than we can replace, and the least pessimistic of us have to reckon with the early loss of Egypt and with it of our prospects in the Mediterranean. On what are we basing this unshaken confidence in victory? On the ability of America to turn out incredible totals of the wrong (as well, no doubt, as some right) types of weapons which we find it increasingly difficult to transport to the distant scene of action? On her vast man-power in process of training under officers who have no experience of modern war? Or are we reckoning that the Russians will work the miracle for us? It is not only the man in the street who cherishes this assurance. The Note issued after the Washington talks assured us that "the over-all picture is more favourable to victory than it was either in August or December of last year." We find it difficult to follow this reasoning. Faith in a victorious future may be a stimulus to those who can combine it with realism and self-criticism. But if we were to rely only on colossal totals of dollars, weapons and men, we should paralyse the powers of will, adaptation and intelligence to which we must trust. Out of disaster we must draw the resolve to reshape our entire organisation for victory.

The crisis in Egypt has moved swiftly during the past week. We have lost in Mersa Matruh our best fortified position, and though it is doubtless true that General Auchinleck knew he could not hold it, the enemy claims that he took there several thousand prisoners and great quantities of supplies. The New Zealanders fought bravely, and we do not doubt that they and our mobile columns have inflicted heavy casualties on the Afrika Korps. Delay, which was the other purpose of their rearguard action, has not been achieved. Rommel is moving rapidly towards Alexandria over the flat plain along the coast which has no defences. We must not talk of his lengthening communications; he has harbours of sorts behind him at Mersa and Tobruk, a water supply in the former little town, and captured stores to draw on. It would be rash to suppose that his striking power is seriously reduced, and it is probable that reinforcements are following him. There are, on the other hand, limits to what we can spare from Syria and Palestine: if we draw more, we invite an attack by way of Crete and Cyprus. The Delta is as flat as a table and every conqueror, from the Hittites to Napoleon, has found it easy to overrun. If our forces are still much inferior in the numbers and fire-power of their tanks and guns, we cannot reckon on any prolonged defence. The immediate consequence of this situation is clear. Without Alexandria we cannot keep the Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Canal has lost its value as a highway. We should not waste our limited forces too prodigally in an attempt to delay the occupation of Egypt: we shall need every tank and gun we have got to hold Palestine and Syria. The moment may arrive when the Canal must be thoroughly demolished.

What, after the loss of Egypt, are the positions which we must still defend? Two in the strategical sense are vital: the oil wells of Iraq and Persia and the roads across Persia which lead to the backdoor of the Caucasus. The oilfield of the Middle East, with its centres at Grozny, Baku, Mosul and Abadan makes a single strategical problem. Its outposts lie in Palestine, Beyrout and Cyprus and these we shall have to supply across the desert highway from Basra and Bagdad. The Suez Canal is no longer vital to us, but the Persian Gulf is. It means as much as the Burma Road once meant, and even more. If we were to lose it, we might very well lose the war, since it is a vital supply route both to the Russians and ourselves. The defence of the Persian Gulf may involve the withdrawal of men and machines from India, a lesser risk that may have to be faced. We cannot afford to lock up there, as we do in this island, a second great army destined to passive defence. The military case for holding Palestine is reinforced by our duty to preserve its Jewish population from Himmler's gas chambers and firing squads.

The more distant strategical perspective depends on the opening of a Second Front. That suggestion may sound ironical. Whether we can achieve that or anything else in this war depends on the ability of the High Command to organise its thinking. It had no one who chose to learn the lessons about mechanised war that might have been drawn first from Spain, then from Poland and finally from France. Even now it will not admit the utility of dive-bombers, of "Stormoviks" (which can cope with tanks by gunfire) or of dual-purpose guns, available either against tanks or aircraft: [illegible] continues to manufacture by mass-production [illegible] inferior to those of the enemy in speed, in accuracy and power of gunfire, and in armour. Professor A. V. Hill still pleads in vain for the representation on the Joint Staff of the three services of a department of mechanical design and chemical research. We have not yet learnt how to harness to the work of invention and design either the mechanical genius of America or the talent of our own scientists, nor has anyone dreamed of using the experience of the Russians. As little have our commanders in the field learned the first tactical lessons of this war. Again and again, they relied in Libya on defence in line, instead of in depth, and were so obsolete in their military thinking that they failed to guess the quite obvious meaning of Rommel's able but orthodox tactics. Are there no younger men who understand machines who might be promoted over the heads of the cavaliers trained by polo and fox-hunting?

But if we were asked to single out the chief cause of disaster in Libya, we should point to the R.A.F. It had numbers on its side, and as always, the gallantry of its pilots. But there was no effective single command over land, sea and air operations. So long as we talk of "co-ordination," we shall not solve this problem. There is no more to be said for the independence of the air force in the field, than for the independence of the artillery. We had supposed that Mr. Lyttelton's mission in Cairo was to solve this question: he did not succeed. But the main responsibility in this matter lay in London. It was obvious six months ago or earlier that the whole future of the campaign on land and sea in this theatre of the war depended on operations in the air which only long-distance giant bombers could perform. Only by destroying the port of Tripoli and the German airfields in Sicily could we hope to stop the steady reinforcement of Rommel's army, or to gain control of the narrows. These specialised aircraft were never sent out. The reason seems to have been that the R.A.F. is bent on keeping them at home for its monster raids on German towns. Over these it has miscalculated: the number of nights in a year on which they can be carried out is very few. To this obsession it is subordinating every other task that should fall to it in this war. If we must bring our strategical thinking up to date, it is no less necessary to unify it. To remedy these defects is the first essential. Otherwise it is as impossible to plan a Second Front as it is idle to discuss the appropriate fate for Adolf Hitler.

Home Front (*by a Correspondent*)

The size of the Armed Forces remains an official secret, and so does the total of the workers engaged in industry, as well as their distribution between different spheres of production. It is therefore impossible to comment except in imprecise terms on Mr. Bevin's pronouncement last week-end that a very large further call-up of men for the Forces is to be expected during the next few months. There can, however, be no doubt that Mr. Bevin meant what he said, or that the call-up will be on a scale which will involve severe pressure both on the war industries and on the less essential industries to release workers for transference to vital productive work. The present position is that large numbers of young men in the war industries, who are working on jobs classed as skilled, have been "de-reserved" during recent months, but have been retained in industry as a result of employers' claims for "deferment." The main impact of the new call-up will be on these "deferred de-reserved" classes; and their departure will impose on employers the need for a large further measure of dilution and of substitution of women for men. The required supply of substitutes can come only from the trades deemed less essential, for there is hardly any reservoir of unemployed man-power left to be used. This points to the inevitability of a drastic handling of the distributive trades, not merely, this time, by a further squeeze upon the small shopkeepers, but also by the actual closing down of many large and middle-sized shops. It will no longer be possible to allow redundant producing or distributing units to remain in being on the plea that they are using very little labour of a type that could be transferred to the war industries. Whatever labour they are using will have to be put where it is needed most; and the labour that cannot be moved out of distribution will have to be used to fill the gaps left by the removal of such workers as can be transferred to more exacting jobs. We have at last come to the point at which a crisis of total man-power has to be faced; and we shall need to face it in a spirit very different from that in which Parliament faced Sir William Beveridge's fuel proposals only a few weeks ago.

* * *

The occasion of this man-power crisis is not the Libyan disaster—though that has, of course, aggravated the problem—but the agreement to institute as soon as possible a second front. For that decision, whether it is to be implemented now or later, means thinking in terms, not perhaps of a larger army, but certainly of one which will have to be kept up to its full strength in face of heavy casualties. The losses, including prisoners of war, in the Far East and in Africa have been on a very small scale in comparison with what must be expected in the course of major operations on the Continent of Europe—or with the casualties already incurred by our Allies on the Russian front. It is bound to be some time before American man-power can make any really large contribution to what is wanted, except in the air. Nor can the problem of transporting large land forces from the United States and thereafter keeping them fed and supplied on this side of the Atlantic be solved until there has been a considerable improvement in the shipping situation. If there is to be a second front in the near future, the brunt of the land fighting must fall to our share; and this means that there must be a big continuous flow of new recruits to fill up gaps in our fighting line. Under these conditions, all earlier calculations about the numbers we can spare from the industrial front have to be revised; and, if need be, we have to face a fall in arms output and a depletion of war stocks in reliance on the power of American war production to replenish our supplies. There is in such a policy an obvious element of risk; for what is to happen if as a result of heavy sinkings the requisite supplies from America cannot be transported? The answer to this question is that the risks are much more serious if we do not act in this way. The Germans are obviously all out to force a decision before the full weight of American man-power can be effectively mobilised. We are under a necessity of acting quickly to take what pressure we can off the Russians and our own remaining forces in the Near East. This means that we have to be prepared to denude our industrial front, in the expectation that the expansion of American output and an improvement in the shipping situation will enable us to replace the deficiency. But it means also that we have to be prepared for a much more drastic curtailment of private expenditure than our governing classes have hitherto shown any disposition to accept, or than we can expect the working classes to accept until the governing classes have effectively practised what they preach.

* * *

The third Report of the Board of Trade's Committee on Retail Trade gives some indication that the necessity for a drastic scaling down of distribution is at last being recognised. The Committee has at any rate gone to the length of proposing a form of compensation for retailers who voluntarily retire from business, the sum required for this purpose being raised by a levy on those who remain in business, and the levy being chargeable as a business expense, so as not to eat into the trader's profits when he is liable to E.P.T. This appears to mean that in effect the State will bear most of the cost, by way of a reduction of the sum paid over as E.P.T. The levy is to be on turnover, with a proviso exempting traders whose non-food turnover is under £1,000, unless they elect to come in voluntarily under an assumed minimum turnover of £500. Food shops as such are not affected, as they fall outside the province of the Board of Trade. Traders who withdraw from trade and benefit under the scheme are to receive a certificate giving them a prior right to re-enter the trade after the war—a proviso which appears to assume that entry into the distributive trade will be subject to control under Britain's coming new order. The Committee further recommends that consideration be given to the issue of similar priority certificates to traders who have ceased trading before the scheme comes into operation. These unfortunates, however, will not be able to claim any share in the proposed compensation. No announcement has yet been made about the Government's attitude towards the Committee's Report; but clearly what it proposes is the very least that can be done in the case of the smaller traders, and even if it is done the problem of the bigger shops will still remain unsolved.

* * *

The A.E.U.'s wage-claim, to which I referred last week, has now been followed by a gesture of the locomotive men, threatening strike action unless their demands are met. That these demands, translated into terms of real purchasing power, *cannot* be met without betraying the war effort will not be a convincing argument as long as wasteful expenditure by the rich is allowed to continue, however true it may be that this expenditure is small in total amount. I had, on business, to lunch this week at a famous restaurant where, a little while ago, I should have paid 3*s*. 6*d*. for a quite satisfactory *bourgeois* meal. This week I paid 5*s*. for lunch, *plus* 2*s*. for cover charge—an increase of just 100 per cent. *for a much better lunch*. I am not pillorying the restaurant in question, which has in fact behaved very moderately by current standards. I am merely pointing out that, as a result of recent regulations, I and many other persons fed, one day this week, not only more expensively but also better than before the new regulations were introduced. Is this tightening the belt? Is this consistent with the demands of a second front? Is this likely to induce the members of the A.E.U. or the N.U.R. or the Locomotive Engineers to be convinced by the beautifully logical arguments which middle-class persons employ to demonstrate that it is very naughty of them to ask for higher wages just now?

The Chinese Peasant

Next week Britain celebrates the horror of five completed years of warfare in China. The forgotten peasants and fishermen of China will take the salute. On July 7th, at 7.30, in the Kingsway Hall, the speakers will be the Chinese Ambassador, the Bishop of Hong Kong (a very remarkable Bishop who really knows the country and who is expecting before long to return to China), Professor Laski, Mr. Shinwell and Philip Jordan—just back from Burma, Moscow and half the rest of the uninhabitable globe. Next day there is to be (from 1.30 to 2.15) a "united service of remembrance" in St. Paul's for those who have died in China and those who still carry on the struggle. Here at least is some recognition of our solidarity: the Archbishop of Canterbury prays for the Chinese coolie. The Chinese Ambassador, Dr. Scott Lidgett and other dignitaries will also help to recall to the British that we are brothers. May that be remembered in official circles in Whitehall when the war reaches its predestined end and we no longer need to praise the coolie as a hero, but to listen to him when he demands recognition as a human being with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The Scene in the House (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

What was behind Wardlaw-Milne's amazing suggestion that the Duke of Gloucester should become Commander-in-Chief of the British Army no one knows. The 1922 Committee do not know of it. The House was grave, cold to Wardlaw-Milne at first, cheering him soon after, and then almost breaking up into groups discussing the Commander-in-Chief suggestion as if at a public meeting for a moment or two, until cries of "Order" brought them to heel. And then Wardlaw-Milne held the House again and was cheered when he sat down. Like a great crowd in the street on some occasion of national ceremonial, the House of Commons, packed on every bench, swayed and moved almost like one body, as Members leaned forward to listen. It rose against Lyttelton when he opened his defence of the Government with a personal attack on Sir Roger Keyes, the deep sincerity

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of whose unhappiness about the conduct of the war, and about the traditions of the Navy in particular, is universally recognised. Lyttelton's speech revealed such damning facts that Clement Davies, white with anger, proposed the adjournment of the debate so that the House could consider the impeachment of those responsible.

Very few Members of the House are wholly in favour of the Government—but they are afraid in the crisis to act in a way likely to upset the Coalition. Arthur Greenwood uttered some good stirring phrases demanding full information for the House and the country. But then the House knew—and the country if they read the papers—that there was no threat of action behind this. The Labour Party twice rejected the advice of its Administrative Committee to table a motion demanding an enquiry into the conduct of the war. Not because it would not be passed, but because it very likely would be passed and mean the reconstruction of the Government. Because the Labour Party wobbled about an inquiry which could have had only useful results, the lead in the debate has passed to a group of M.P.s of a very heterogeneous kind. And because this censure motion has been put down, the House has got more and almost all too intimate details of the Libyan campaign from the man who was Minister in the Near East and is now Minister of Production. There is a great stirring in the House—there will be a greater stirring still. We shall not go on to the end of the war with the Government unchanged.

PARLIAMENT SPEAKS

In the most serious debate since 1940 Sir John Wardlaw-Milne advances the fantastic suggestion that the Duke of Gloucester should be made Commander-in-Chief. The House was dumbfounded; the press passes over the incident with the embarrassed phrases usually reserved for the grosser improprieties. We make no pretence to fathom Sir John's mind. We have never before regarded him as an irresponsible, bubbling ill-considered words. An able business man with large interests in the Far East, Sir John was an ardent supporter of Mr. Chamberlain. He has built for himself during the war a remarkable reputation based on the objective and highly informative reports of the Committee on Public Expenditure of which he is the chairman. Because of his knowledge and the weight he carries he is regarded as the Government's most formidable critic. How do we account for this strange lapse of judgment? Does Sir John seriously imagine, and are there any with him who imagine, that at this grave crisis of our history the appointment as Commander-in-Chief of a Royal Duke is a suitable remedy for the disease that afflicts our society? The suggestion would have been out of date at any date since the French Revolution. As for the Duke himself, the public knows little of him except that he is the brother-in-law of the Duke of Buccleuch and that, in France, his name was associated with a clique of brass-hats who earned no particular place in the nation's regard.

This preposterous suggestion threw doubt on Sir John's judgment and destroyed the effect of a speech which was otherwise full of relevant fact and serious argument. This mattered less, however, because Mr. Lyttelton's reply for the Government was more damaging than any case that could be made by its critics. The case is this. After three years of war the country is told in effect that we are still ruled by people who do not understand the war; that the reasons for disasters are wrong type of weapon that we have been making ever since the war began, that the dive-bombers that every soldier declared, on his return from Dunkirk, to be the key to Germany's success, have not even yet been provided, that British soldiers are still being sacrificed to prejudice, ignorance, and complacency. The fact that Britain is still producing tanks that were good in 1939 is typical. The absence of bombers in Egypt and of dive-bombers in the Libyan campaign illustrate the whole case. We still hear in the summer of 1942 statements from Ministers and on the wireless about the co-operation of the R.A.F. and the Army. Can one imagine the German Command boasting of "co-operation" between the three Services? A general does not boast of co-operation of his artillery with the infantry. Dive-bombers are necessary artillery. Big bombers were kept in this country instead of being sent to Egypt because the Air Command wanted them for spectacular raids against Germany. We have in fact still no unified Command and an utterly out-of-date attitude to the scientist. Once again in this war we are confronted with the incapacity of a ruling group to cope with the situation which they have themselves created.

On so much every unofficial observer of the war would agree. The problem of what to do at this late hour remains, as it remained after Norway, Greece, Crete, Malay, Singapore, Burma—all of them "late hours."

Few Members care to go into the Lobby with the very confused and divided group which ranges itself behind Sir John Wardlaw-Milne. Abstention remains the only alternative way of registering a profound distrust of the Government. It was for this reason a misfortune that the Labour Party decided not to press for an inquiry. We understand that this proposal was defeated by the arguments of Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin. Since they spoke the further series of defeats have added weight to the plea that an inquiry into Libya and Tobruk would only sidetrack the minds of the public and the Government from the desperately urgent situation that has developed since these defeats. Drastic changes will have to be made. For the moment a useful step would be for Parliament to set up a permanent Commission to inquire more deeply into the causes of the defeats and the ways in which they can be obviated.

REFORMING EDUCATION

The reform of education is in the air; but it has not yet been brought down to earth. There is a great ferment of committees, official and unofficial, making plans for new educational systems; and almost everyone who gives tongue upon the matter promises us that revolutionary changes are at hand. The Association of Directors and Secretaries, usually a staid enough body, puts forward proposals for the entire abolition of the dual system, the raising of the school-leaving age to 16, drastic handling of private schools, and most of the other changes which have been advocated hitherto only by the most advanced types of reformers. The Liberals, as well as the Labour Party, have declared in principle in favour of the "common school," at any rate at the primary stage—that is, of a common type of school to be attended by children of all classes up to the age of 11, irrespective of their parents' status or income. The notion of part-time continued education up to 18 seems to have been pretty generally accepted, though projects range from a few hours a week up to a system of half-time continued education. The main body of educationists is now arguing not whether but when the leaving age shall be raised to 16, though there are still parties who doubt whether it is worth raising the age beyond 15 until the context and character of secondary education have been greatly changed. There is a widespread demand for a big extension of technical education, and for a closer relation between both technical and continued education and schemes of apprenticeship and training for the "gainful business" of life. There is a great deal of talk about the future of the "public" schools, and about a "common code" for all types of higher education. The examination system and the curricula of secondary schools are under official review; and another official committee is studying the whole problem of the training of teachers. Finally, the Board of Education has just set up a new Youth Advisory Council and, at the Ministry of Labour, employers and trade unionists have been meeting to discuss the future of industrial training and its relation to the educational system.

The activity is prodigious; and we have mentioned only a tiny proportion of those who are engaged in it. The teachers' organisations, the Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey, the Workers' Educational Association, and a host of other bodies are also drawing up plans of educational reform; the Churches are hard at work on the problem of religious education; the Governing Bodies Association and the Headmasters' Conference are busying themselves with plans for granting more scholarships to working-class children and therewith getting money from the State to save the "public" schools from eclipse. Dartington Hall, C.E.M.A., and other bodies are enquiring into the provision for education in the arts; and so on, through the entire range of educational, social and political bodies in any way concerned with problems of "reconstruction." Education, we are told, is the key to everything—to saving us from another war, to making democracy work despite the taunts of the totalitarians, to raising industrial efficiency and therewith enabling us to improve our standards of life, to inspiring everybody with the spirit of public service, and to making good the shortage of children by elevating their quality. If many cooks could make a good broth, we should be well on the way to a perfect educational system.

But are we? Over educational reform, as over everything else that matters, looms the shadow of "national unity." It is easy enough to get Tories to proclaim a generalised belief in the virtues of democratic education. The trouble begins when any proposal for reform is made specific. Take, for example, the question of the "common school." Everyone knows that there are at present two sharply separate systems of education in this country, one for the rich and one for the poor. There are, at the secondary stage, bridges leading across from the one to the other; but they are not equipped to bear much traffic. The two systems will remain sharply separate as long as children of one class go to a public elementary school and children of another class to a private preparatory school or to the preparatory department of a private "public" school. Are the Tories (the word is used in a sense wider than that of party politics) prepared to send their children to the public elementary schools? Or are they only prepared to throw the private schools open to some sort of public inspection, so as to bring them nominally within the range of the public educational system? This is the first acid test of sincerity in those who profess their readiness to make education an instrument of democracy.

Then, again, are the Tories prepared to make the "public" schools, if they are to be kept at all, really as open to the children of poor as of rich parents? Or are they prepared only to grant a limited number of scholarships to boys and girls from the State schools, in the expectation of getting in return enough public money to save the "public" schools from the bankruptcy which is threatening all except the most heavily endowed? This scholarship solution, so far from democratising the "public" schools, would merely lift a small number of working-class children into the middle classes, without any effect on the class system beyond actually reinforcing it with a manageable number of clever recruits. Yet this, pretty plainly, is what the Tories are after.

Or, yet again, are the Tories really prepared for a "common code" in all post-primary education? If the school-leaving age goes to 15 or 16, are they prepared for all children to pass

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at 11 to schools which, however widely they may differ in curriculum, will not be allowed to differ in standards of building and equipment, in size or classes or status and remuneration of teachers, or in any other particular that would mark off one type of school as inferior to another? Or are they still planning to have new " secondary or senior schools inferior in most respects to " grammar " or " public " schools at which the majority of the children will be expected to continue full-time education to a later age? Yet again, if part-time education is to be continued up to 18, are the Tories prepared to make of it a real cultural education that will lead on naturally to adult education in its higher forms, or are they planning to make it mainly a means of training wage-workers for particular trades and occupations?

All these questions have direct reference to the schools themselves. But there are others, no less pertinent, which equally require unequivocal answers. At present, most secondary teachers go to a university and then to a university training department—in all at least a four years' course—whereas most elementary teachers get only two years in a separate teachers' training college. There are in this system two separate vices. First, the training college system involves markedly inferior educational standards; and secondly it involves both a premature decision to adopt the teaching vocation and a disastrous segregation during training of those who are to be teachers from the rest of the community. Are the Tories (again in a more than party-political sense) prepared to agree that elementary teachers ought to be quite as well educated as secondary teachers, that no one ought to be irrevocably committed to teaching until the latest possible moment in a university career, and that teachers ought not to be segregated from others during the processes of higher education and training?

It might be thought that, on this matter at any rate, many Tories could be brought to agree. But alas, at this point as at so many others the religious issue comes in. Teachers' training colleges are largely dominated by the Churches, which will probably fight like mad dogs sooner than surrender their hold; and in educational matters one has often only to scratch a Tory in order to find a Churchman (or, of course, a Catholic) under his skin. There are, no doubt, immense practical difficulties in the way of providing every teacher with an education of university standard; but the main obstacle in the way of getting these difficulties faced is the desire of the religious to maintain their hold over the processes of training.

This is fully as serious an aspect of the "religious problem" as the much more debated issue of the non-provided schools. Most unprejudiced people will agree with the Directors and Secretaries that the only sensible way of dealing with this issue is to abolish the non-provided schools altogether. Their buildings are mostly deplorable, and their educational standards are often disastrously low. The bodies which provide them are for the most part quite unable to raise the money needed for rebuilding, with the consequence that they have been allowed to lag far behind the development of modern standards. The religious bodies would like the State to supply the money for rebuilding, and still to leave the schools in their hands. Are the Tories prepared to give them up?

Underlying all these questions, and many others which there is no space to even ask, is the great general question, What for? What are the purposes we want our educational system to serve? It can no doubt be formally answered that we want our schools to teach boys and girls to develop their personalities, to become efficient at the jobs to which they proceed from school or college, and to imbibe a spirit of constructive public service. So much is common form; but it leaves the really vital questions quite unanswered. For it does not say whether the public service required is to be that which is appropriate to a democracy of social equals or to a plutocracy, whether the jobs at which they are to become efficient are to be assigned to them on the score of ability or of their parents' wealth or influence, or whether the possibilities they are to develop are to be conceived of in a spirit of social equality or in one designed to foster different virtues for the rich man in his mansion and the poor man who enters his factory gate.

Nor can these questions be answered in purely educational terms. The educational system is and must be a function of the community's way of living. A truly democratic educational system inside a plutocracy is a contradiction in terms, for boys and girls must be educated for the positions which await them in adult life. Failure to adjust the educational system to the needs of the social and economic system means the production of misfits; and that in turn means revolution—Fascist or otherwise, as the balance of forces may determine. Before we can agree on the right educational arrangements for after the war, we must agree upon the kind of society we are setting out to build; and, as there is no possibility of our agreeing on that under a Government of " national unity," there is no possibility under such a Government that educational reform will be anything more than a makeshift and a make-believe. For the moment, this truth is obscured because it is all talking and no doing. But let Mr. Butler propose to take but one really practical step towards educational reform, and he will speedily discover that he has poked his head into a hornets' nest.

FOR THE COMMON MAN

Sir John Orr, as the world knows, is one of the pioneers of human and animal nutrition. His new book is a war-book, under the title *Fighting for What?** He is entirely clear about the answer, for his mind holds knowledge as the tool with which to shape purpose. That is common enough, we all do it, in our degree, but the mind is rare and pre-eminent that respects both the tool and the material it works in, and Sir John's material is no less than the life of the human race. We are fighting, he says, for the Four Freedoms, and of these Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want are his affair. If they

> were expressed in concrete terms we could have a statement of peace aims which the common men in all lands would understand. They would realise that this is a war of the common people for the common people.

Concrete terms, for him, are food, houses, jobs; food enough for health, a house for comfort, a job for happiness. And the point is that the supply of these in the quantity needed by the peoples would abolish unemployment, and raise the general level of living far above anything the world has seen or dreamed. On housing, Sir John will fall foul of the planners to a certain extent, for he proposes the immediate building of houses for all the homeless, on the standard of two or three sleeping in a room, running water and a water-closet, and a bath perhaps for those following dirty occupations. Nor is his year of labour service for all under 21, adequate as a means of providing housing: building is a skilled trade. But, of course, he is right in essence, for house-building and the allied trades must be for decades after the war the second greatest industry and creator of real wealth; we do not talk of public works as the remedy for unemployment, but as the expression of society's determination to rebuild Once we see the positive task before us the Labour will employ the capital, not Capital labour.

It is upon the greatest industry, however, that Sir John writes with an authority none will gainsay, for agriculture and the distribution of food must be commanded henceforth by his own science of nutrition. Under capitalist economy, as he points out, food is produced for profit, and those who cannot pay a profitable price go underfed. A third of the people of the United States, in 1941, and a third of our own, were living on inadequate diets—the British figure of malnutrition has been reduced from 50 per cent. to 30 per cent. since 1935 by milk distribution and school meals. Except for a handful of the smaller democracies, notably New Zealand and Holland, the conditions elsewhere were worse in peacetime; and when India, China, and the colonial races were reached permanent underfeeding and periodic starvation were the rule. Even food-exporting countries do not feed their own people sufficiently. Sir John shows how deficiency diseases such as rickets and pellagra, are caused by the bad food of poverty; which also goes in company with consumption, mental deficiency, smallness of stature, short-livedness and high infant mortality. On the other hand, good food produces astonishing results. Over a generation nutrition in England has greatly improved, and the average height of children has gone up 2 to 3 inches. Children whose intelligence in school improved when the apathy of underfeeding disappeared were paralleled by working women suffering from nutritional anæmia who, as the result of treatment, became interested in their appearance and bought new hats.

If agriculture is adapted to nutritional needs both home production and imports will have to be increased. Milk production in Britain, for instance, should be doubled. If the needs of a ruined post-war world are considered, agriculture will be expanding and producing for scarcity, not for glut, for many years to come. Sir John is definite about a planning organisation for Britain. A Food Planning Commission should be established now, on the lines of a public utility company. Its members should be appointed for a number of years and should not be members of the food trade. Below it should be Commodity Boards for milk and dairy products, for beef and mutton, for cereals, and so on. This system should organise the home production and import of adequate food for the people and should actually own the key-points of distribution, such as slaughterhouses and milk depots. It should give the producer a guaranteed price; store food so as to level out supplies, and see that the food is sold at a price the poorest can pay.

As to world food policy, Sir John foresees a continuous process, beginning with relief as a first step:

> The nations with food must give all they can, even to the extent of skimping themselves, and continue to give until the people of Europe are as well fed as they are. That is the spirit of the new world order. They must also assist in restoring agriculture in the devastated areas and in building up the flocks and herds which have been reduced by slaughter. It will take many years to bring the dairy herds of Europe up to the level needed to supply the milk European countries need on the new health standard.

All nations partners in the New World Government must, the author says, adopt the policy of providing food for health for all their citizens.

Sir John makes short work of the financial problem, since he assumes an economy based on production for use and not for profit. His clarity and courage of mind do not admit the evasion of the political issues at present so much *à la môde*. His food policy is only possible in peace, and for peace, he says plainly, regional federations will not do. A world government for security, and national self-government for other purposes are his solution.

None of this is, in a sense, unfamiliar; but if we know it we have learned it from the patient demonstration of Sir John Orr and men likeminded with him over many years. Certainly the American ministers like Wallace and Milo Perkins, who teach planning for better living standards, are among his disciples. It was not for nothing that he visited Washington after the British Association meeting where he outlined his food policy. Sir John is the teacher of rulers, but he is most of all the servant of the common folk. That is why, out of the disaster and loss of war, he creates not bitterness but hope, and a call for a gospel of economic freedom and common brotherhood.

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* *Fighting for What?* By Sir John Orr. (Macmillan. 2s. 6d.)

A LONDON DIARY

Why? Out of the innumerable questions of the moment the most bewildering to me is why Mr. Churchill should damage his own superb reputation by emulating the feats of the Cairo spokesman. He told us that Egypt was safe; he found every reason for satisfaction with the early progress of the campaign in Libya; after the fall of Tobruk he declared that Egypt would be securely held. Now it needed no deep probing on the part of any journalist last week to know that Cairo and the Suez were terribly threatened, and that Mersa Matruh could not possibly be held. This is no wisdom after the event. The most general outline of the position after the Libyan battle, the roughest estimate of the figures of tanks lost, showed that General Auchinleck had no chance whatever of stopping Rommel at the Egyptian frontier. If I could have found anybody to take such a bet with me I would have laid heavy odds against Mersa Matruh lasting a fortnight. Yet Mr. Churchill again stakes his reputation on the most reassuring statements. Why? He has repeated this optimism in every campaign from Narvik to Tobruk. He cannot suffer from half-information or, like the public, be misled by false reports. Is it that he is just temperamentally incapable of not making an optimistic statement even when the disappointment caused will obviously do more damage than realism or silence?

* * *

A good deal of the trouble comes from our sporting tradition. We have learnt to expect to sit in a right little tight little island and take a box-office view of wars on the Continent. Mr. Churchill, like Palmerston, owes some of his popularity to his way of playing up this sporting spirit. The Press is as much to blame here as Mr. Churchill. The Russians, whose losses have been immense, and who have been defeated time after time in this war, do not fall into this mistake, because they never treat battles as rounds in a boxing match. Many thousands can be taken prisoners near Kharkov and no one speaks of a Russian disaster. The war is a professional matter, understood as a whole; reports deal with facts at appropriate intervals. You will see that this mistake accounts for much of the instability of British opinion. Round 1 to Britain, Round 2 to Rommel. One paper even declares without evidence that half his tanks are destroyed. Round 3, Britain takes the count . . . and so forth. This is the worst possible way of treating your public, and the fact that it is what the public is used to is only a reason for learning a more professional technique.

* * *

I should like to hear a good deal more about some of the matters reported this week to the *Times* by its correspondent on the French Frontier in a despatch which does not seem to have attracted as much attention as its importance seems to deserve. For it not only threw valuable light on the direction of current German diplomatic intrigue, but incidentally gave an encouraging indication of German estimates of what Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill called the "over-all position." According to this message, the Germans have recently founded a "Banque Inter-Continentale de Credit," with the ostensible object of assuring "the collaboration of French, German and American capital in rehabilitation of commerce between Europe and America." The real object, however, is to try to "sow mistrust and drive a wedge" between the English-speaking countries and Soviet Russia, and a second, simultaneous wedge between Britain and America. The correspondent explains that "the opinion is gaining strength week by week among certain authoritative persons on the Continent that the war cannot be ended within a reasonable time by any decisive military victory." Any other "solution" would, however, involve certain modifications of the German regime. He quotes the gist of what is stated to have been a conversation on this subject between a German exile formerly prominent in Germany, and an emissary of the German Government, who had come to sound him as to his "willingness to collaborate if certain modifications in the regime were made." The exile declared that the United Nations would, in his view, "not consider any other end to the war than a decisive military victory." To this the emissary replied by emphasising points of potential discord between Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union as grounds for belief that the "decisive military victory" of the anti-Fascist powers could be averted.

* * *

"No one," Lord Northcliffe used to say, "has yet heard of Pears' Soup." On the expert estimate of the vast and unimpressionable public, the *Daily Worker* has not done badly if, on the evidence of the Gallup poll reported in the *News Chronicle* this week, only 21 per cent. of the population is now unaware that it has been banned. Not that so large a percentage ever heard of it while it was in circulation. The Communists themselves are very confident that the paper will be alive again in a few months. The Labour Party vote gave them a new basis for agitation: they claim to have estimated the vote very accurately and they are sure that the vote at the Trade Union Congress this September will be even more impressive. Bill Rust, the editor, who I heard talking on the subject the other evening, said that if he were thinking of the Party and not of the war, he would want the ban to continue. The *Worker* had become a kind of myth, a symbol of the struggle round which the workers were increasingly rallying. This process has gone a long way in most of the big Trade Unions. If the *Daily Worker* is soon allowed to start again the rank and file in the mines and workshops will certainly look to it to state their case and to represent their interests. Bill Rust would, I thought, be very conscious indeed of the responsibility. As long as Britain and the U.S.S.R. are allies you can be sure that the *Daily Worker* will put the war first and help to bully workers who are inclined to rank their own grievances above the immediate tasks of production. So much so that, I think, in some quarters the reality of the *Daily Worker*, putting the Soviet Union always first, troubles more about production than workers' traditions, will be a disappointment to some who vociferously demand the lifting of the ban. But the Government has nothing to fear from the *Daily Worker*—at least until the war is over.

* * *

How far the Communists will go in following to its logical end a line they have adopted, I learnt from people who have been active in the Maldon election. Here was an Independent candidate who has for years been regarded as a "fellow-traveller," who wanted a second front, to improve war efficiency, and to make Britain Socialist. The Conservative candidate whom the Communists supported was the most faithful supporter of Chamberlain and so far at the opposite extreme of politics that he was supported during the election by Victor Raikes, M.P., the notorious Franco-phil and member of the Imperial Policy Group, which is the most bitterly anti-Soviet bunch in the country. The Labour Party position was only less absurd; they held a meeting in the district in which the official unity view was explained. But everyone knew that local Labour would vote for Driberg, and I hear that no one put in more intensive work on his behalf than the secretary of the local party. The Nine-Point Group worked hard for Driberg who was, of course, an excellent candidate. His idea of using his Hickey reputation by writing regular columns in the local press was thoroughly sound. I heard some complaints that he had a poor organisation, but that meant, I think, that he concentrated on Braintree, the one industrial town in his constituency. In any case the total vote of 45 per cent. of the whole electorate showed that there was great local interest: it amounted to about 70 per cent. of the available votes. This, I take it, was at least in part a reflection of Tobruk: anger at incompetence swept William Hickey into Parliament by a majority several thousand bigger than he would have won if Rommel had been successfully held.

* * *

Lord Vansittart seems to hate being criticised. His replies are really the oddest thing to read. He has recently expressed himself in strong language about those people who defame him by saying that his works are good fodder for Dr. Goebbels, who finds them to strengthen German morale. He seems very hurt that anybody should say these things. Yet we can quote, with dates if he wants, the frequent use Dr. Goebbels has made of his writing. Dr. Goebbels of course makes use of many types of publication, but the point he emphasises about Vansittart is unique. He quotes him as proof that official circles intend the destruction of Germany in spite of the promises of the Atlantic Charter. Now comes the final test. *Black Record* has been translated into German and widely distributed by Dr. Goebbels as propaganda in Germany.

* * *

At eight o'clock on Tuesday morning, after a smooth B.B.C. voice had reassured me about the loss of Mersah Matruh, it went on to cheer me up, by reporting that the *Gneisenau* at Gdynia is in process of having all her gun turrets removed from her deck. This was held to prove the success of our bombardment, while she lay at Brest. I wonder. A less comfortable explanation occurred to me. What if she is being converted, like the latest American battleships, into an aircraft carrier?

* * *

The following "overheard on a bus" story reaches me this week!

First girl: "Is your young man broad-minded?"

Second girl: "Oh, yes, he thinks of nothing else."

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to X.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

May I suggest to members who, having read and inwardly digested their *Veterinary Records*, make a practice of handing the copies to the local salvage committee, that certain copies would be much better posted to the Air Ministry for dropping over Germany.

One can imagine in Hanover, which has a veterinary college but no dogs, the inhabitants' chagrin on learning that, in this third year of war there is still obtainable in England "an antiseptic soap made specially for dogs" of "finest toilet quality base,"—Letter in *The Veterinary Record.*

If Major Lloyd George were to visit some of the women's clubs in the West End, even he would be content with the attempts made to save fuel. During the last few days and evenings there has not been a glimmer of fire, artificial or otherwise in public rooms, and strict control is exercised over heating in the bedrooms.—*Eastern Daily Press.*

Commander A. B. Campbell, Brains Trust "resident member," is going on the stage. . . . "I've no talent, really (he said). I think they just want to see my face!"—*News Chronicle.*

If young Bill from Bermondsey has the chance of becoming President of Pop—(Pop is a sort of schoolboy cabinet of Eton's athletic and intellectual stars)—even the ghost of that "class war" will be finally laid.—Beverley Nichols in the *Sunday Chronicle.*

They Sought Out Rommel.—The Diary of the Libyan Campaign. H. M. Stationery Office, *6d.*

LAY

(AFTER LORD MACAULAY)

On 1st June the present (coal) control runs out, and this scheme must be applied by that date.—Sir Stafford Cripps, May 7th. Rationing has been dropped for the present because the public is not yet satisfied that it is necessary.—Sir John Anderson, June 10th.

Clem Attlee's brow was sad
Clem Attlee's pulse was low
And glumly looked he at the plebs,
And darkly at the foe !
" The winter will be on us
And fuel will be short
And how work rationing without
The Beveridge report ? "

Then out spake valiant Dalton,
Lord of the Board of Trade,
" By every British industry
Our word must be obeyed,
And what can clamour louder
For Government control
Than the rationing of fuel
And the management of coal ?

" What fear we the Committee
Of Nineteen-twenty-two ?
I with two more to help me
Will see this business through.
Hang out the plan of Beveridge
Since rationing must be,
And who will stand at my right hand
And push the plan with me ? "

Then up spake Arthur Greenwood
Late of a Ministry,
" Lo, I will stand at thy right hand
And push the plan with thee."
And out spake stout Sir Stafford Cripps
Home from his embassy,
" I will abide at thy left side
And push the plan with thee."

" Let none be for the Party,
Let all be for the State,
Let the rich man help the poor
That the poor may love the great,
Let coal be fairly portioned,
And equitably sold
That there be no hangover
From the bad days of old."

" Ho, Dalton " quoth Clem Attlee,
" As thou sayest, let it be."
And straight before the Commons
Forth went the dauntless three.
Just then a scout came flying
All pale with haste and fear,
" Roll up the plan of Beveridge,
For Erskine Hill is here ! "

The three stood calm and silent
And looked upon their foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From the Committee rose ;
From thirty throats resounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As the Chairman whirled his broadsword
Against the dauntless three.

For meantime propaganda
Had been applied with care
And now the plan of Beveridge
Was hanging by a hair.
" Come back, come back, stout Dalton "
Now cried the Fathers all,
" Leave this to the Lord President
Lest all of us should fall."

Back darted the Lord Privy Seal,
Brave Greenwood darted back,
And right across the party line
They saw an ugly crack.
Alone stood valiant Dalton
But with a troubled mind,
The vanguard of his foes before,
His flapping friends behind.
He straightway thought of compromise
To reach the self-same goal,
And the whole plan of Beveridge
Dropped like a burning coal.

" O Commons, House of Commons
I for indulgence pray
To hark to our Lord President
Upon a future day."
And now he touches bottom,
Now on safe ground he stands
And round him throng the Fathers
To press his nerveless hands.

* * * *

And in the nights of winter
When cold north winds shall blow,
When the pipes are cased in ice,
And the sill is heaped with snow.
When the pot cannot be heated
And the lamp cannot be lit,
When the oldest beldam curses
And the youngest children spit,
With rude plebeian laughter
The story will be told
How dauntless Dalton fled the fight
In the bad days of old.

Sagittarius

INDIA : THE TWO VOICES

The Indian Song of Songs depicts to us two warrior hosts drawn up against one another in order of battle, and the hero Arjuna standing in his chariot half-way between the two, and looking with horror and misgiving at his clansmen and relatives among his enemies, and declaring that he cannot fight against them, not for the kingship of the three worlds.

> " I do not know which would be better for us,
> That we should be victors or vanquished by these.
> My normal self is borne down by misplaced pity,
> My mind confused, reft of all sense of right."

The divine herdsman, Krishna, who is his charioteer, rebukes his weakness, and expounds to him the philosophy of action, in a long exchange of question and argument, which ultimately convinces him of his duty as one of a warrior caste.

This episode—a debate on the justification of violence carried out in the imminent presence of the enemy—looks like a poetical extravagance. But it is not so extravagant that it cannot be repeated in the field of actual performance. The Japanese armies stand on the threshold of India ; and Mahatma Gandhi—if we may set his *Harijan* for the moment side by side with the twenty centuries old *Bhagavad Gita*—deplores Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's efforts to encourage Indians to resist aggression by violent means, and advises every Briton and every Indian to surrender to it.

A statement of the duties of royalty in the epic of the War between Kauravas and Pandavas—a very detailed and advanced statement of those duties—is inaugurated by the expression of a king's desire to resign the burden of them. " Our heroic foes have been slain. We have committed sin . . . The *Srutis* declare that he that practises renunciation escapes from birth and death . . . Abandoning the whole of my kingdom, therefore, and the things of this Earth, I shall go to the woods . . . I have no need for kingdom or for pleasure."

The warrior seeks to abandon the fight. The king seeks to abandon the kingdom.

But there were always two voices. one that renounced, and one that condemned renunciation. Perhaps the Brahman teachers who imagined the political sermon of the Epic, would have been critical of that British voice which would renounce all responsibility for the Government of India.

What is the explanation of the persistent recurrence in India of the voice which forbids violence ? It is not unique to India. It is heard in some phases and forms of Christianity. But in India it finds a popular echo, which indicates the wider acceptance there of a certain fundamental philosophy which makes for contemplation rather than action.

If we can arrive at an understanding of this popular echo, we shall have taken a step towards the solution of the Indian riddle.

The subtlest brains both of East and West exercised themselves for centuries—no doubt they are exercising themselves still—to decide the question of the reality of universals. Some thought it—still think it—an idle quest. What does it matter whether you hold that the individual alone is real, and that all assemblages of individuals, species, genera, and the like, are either mere names, or, at most, convenient conceptions which assist the processes of thought: or that the more general is the reality, and the most general the supreme reality ?

By their fruits let them be judged. What are some of the actual results of the two sets of opinions ?

The European world, or anyhow the scientific part of it, seems to have made up its mind that, for working purposes at all events, both the individual and the group are realities. The particular case serves as the basis of experiment, and the group meets the needs of classification and nomenclature, with the result that science has made extraordinary advances. The importance assigned to the individual has profoundly affected political institutions.

If Europe's choice of an answer has been on the whole one favourable to the growth of science, to activity and individual freedom, that of India has been, on the whole, the reverse. For her

> " The One remains, the many change and pass."

Having chosen the conviction that reality is in the general and not in the particular, she has been led on to the more general and finally to the most general, to a monism in which all are included in one, to a final oneness, making insignificant and obliterating the particular. All things except the final One become illusion. Pantheism in religion is one of the consequences. The blurring of distinctions, indifference to the world and its concerns, a preference for contemplation over action, are necessary results. I am alike the slain, and the slayer, but the slaying does not affect the permanent, unborn, unchanging, the reality behind the phenomena.

The Brahmanical scriptures fought hard against the indifferentism which appears to be the inevitable tendency of such convictions. In their insistence upon the separate duties of each caste, and in particular upon the activity of kings in maintaining the framework of society, they represent that other voice which the Song of Songs makes ultimately to prevail against the promptings of a dream philosophy. But the dream philosophy has gone for much in determining the general direction of Indian thought. Men who have lived busy lives, and accommodated themselves conspicuously to the calls of the world of illusory phenomena, come back in their latter days to convictions and practices which have become a part of the very air which surrounds them and supports their life.

As in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the dream philosophy of the *Vedanta* may be made to consort with unlike companions, and exhortation to the fulfilment of active duties may be made to follow upon the preaching of the doctrine that all is one, or that the One is All : but this very inconsequence of teaching and practice seems to be a part of that general blurring of outlines which results from the doctrine. The world must go on, each caste must discharge its own duties. kings and warriors must see to it that the lists are kept open for the great mock tournament : but a mock tournament it is, and who has his heart in a play which is only make-believe ? There is a figure in Tennyson's *Princess* who, in the midst of battle with his peers, imagines that he is tilting against shadows, and falls an easy victim to his opponent.

That is the way that the *Vedanta* tends : and the *Vedanta* is the commonest philosophy in

India and the underlying thought of most Indians.

What is the relevance of all this to the problems of to-day, including the problem of the relations of Britain to India? The very fact that we find ourselves compelled to speak of "Britain" and "India" shows how hard it is to escape from treating universals as real. In effect we can give reality to these geographical expressions only by the device of an imagined plebiscite in which a majority of voters is to have a prevailing voice. Long democratic practice and political education has made the fiction a passable one for Britain. Honesty forbids us to pretend that it is an equally efficient method of getting at the wishes of Indians. What it would supply is evidence of the best political organisation: and, in default of anything better, it might be necessary to accept that as an expression of the will of the Indian people.

A better test would be an agreement between the leaders of the principal parties. That is a thing very difficult to attain because the absence of democratic experience of compromise makes mutual accommodation of claims all but impossible. Besides, is not an ideal uniformity, or oneness, an essential implication of the Indian philosophy, and is not a compromise between variables with mutual concessions abhorrent to it? Acquiescence in a reasonable solution proposed by authority is another matter. This has, for its apology, the pressure of an outside power. Experience shows that such acquiescence—if it can once be brought to a start—has a tendency to be progressive, and to include successively more and more sections of thought.

Closer union, not increasing separation, is the obvious lesson of recent events. In that closer union there must be complete recognition of equality of status: including the right to separate, where separation is the considered wish, *and if separation is a geographical and economic possibility*. But the separation of Mahommedan from Hindu India is not a geographical possibility because of the intimate admixture of the population and their economic interdependence. It is to be resisted with no less determination than was the attempt to divide the Southern from the Northern States of America in 1861–5. There are things worth fighting for and the averting of divisions which create the prospect of future wars is one. India is so far a "reality" that she must remain a political unit, either within or without the British Commonwealth.

Englishmen and Indians have been brought together by historical destiny. The former have been slow to recognise the insistence and the justice of the demand for equality of status. It is not too late even now to mend mistakes. Indians have perhaps contributed to this one by a too great facility in the acceptance of domination. Where there is yielding, there will always be encroachment. One thing which Englishmen have to contribute to the present and to the future is the strengthening of that other voice in which Krishna spoke to Arjuna: even though it speak now against themselves as well as against the Japanese:

> "Whoso, without concern for gain,
> Takes up such work as needs be done
> Is true renouncer and worker too"

is the pronouncement of Krishna to his master-disciple. It has its lesson for India, now standing irresolute between the two warring hosts. It has its lesson for Britain too, disposed to shuffle off the whole burden of settlement on to other shoulders. Her part must be an active, not a passive one.

JOHN MAYNARD

MORE LIFE

I READ the other day the report in this journal of a "Mass Observation" on the subject of the immortality of the soul, and discovered that only about one person in three nowadays believes that the life of the soul is indestructible. How rapidly the old faith about the destiny of the soul has waned! If there had been any "Mass Observation" in the world in which I grew up, I am sure that at least 90 per cent. of those questioned would have voted unhesitatingly for immortality. Most of us were churchgoers, real or nominal, and we no more doubted that the soul would survive than we doubted that sunset would be followed by sunrise. One of the blackest sheep I ever knew was most particular about going to church twice a year—on Christmas Day and on Good Friday—and, when maudlin, used to boast that his father had been superintendant of a Sunday school. He did not lead a Christian life, but even in his cups he accepted the Christian account of the universe.

It is all the odder that we should have had this fervent faith in the next world, because certainly, when we were young, none of us wanted to go there. There was a popular hymn in which one of the verses began:

> There's a home for little children
> Beyond the bright blue sky;

and there was another Moody-and-Sankey hymn which began

> "I would like to die," said Willie,
> "If my papa could die, too,"

papa having the excuse, however, that he is too busy—in fact,

> That he has so much to do.

But I never met a little Willie who wanted to go to the home beyond the bright blue sky. All the children whom I knew, if they had been given the choice between going to Heaven and going to Portrush or Donaghadee even for a month, would have enthusiastically chosen Portrush or Donaghadee.

For the heaven of the popular imagination in those days was not a place attractive to children. Instead of the green pastures and quiet waters of the country they knew there were monotonously golden pavements with angels flying about everywhere playing harps in nightdresses. There were no horses—no anything, indeed, on which a child's affection lingers. The great delight of the place was that one would meet one's relatives and friends again, though one sometimes wondered whether they would remain for ever at the age at which one had known and loved them. I do not think, however, that even in childhood I ever pictured them flying about and playing harps. Even on the golden floors they seemed to me to remain very like themselves, dressed in costumes such as one knew in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

There was, of course, another sound reason for wanting to go to Heaven. Going to Heaven was the only alternative to going to Hell; and even Heaven seemed Paradise in comparison with an eternal fiery furnace.

Strangely enough, the belief in Heaven seemed to decline as the belief in the goodness of God grew. More and more people found it impossible to believe that a good God could create millions of miserable bipeds whom, as he was omniscient, he must have known to be doomed to everlasting punishment. This doubt allied to other doubts—doubts about the first chapter of Genesis, doubts about Jonah and the whale—led to doubts about everything till in our day the Sadducees may be said to have inherited the earth.

To-day masses of people take the non-survival of the soul for granted in much the same way as their grandparents took the survival of the soul for granted. Some of them are even passionate in their belief in non-survival. I have met men who expressed an intense dislike of the prospect of living again. They say that life is a bubble that bursts, a candle-flame that blows out, and are glad of this. The matter has not yet, however, been settled scientifically. The unbeliever as well as the believer lives by faith, and if he is dogmatically certain of the death of the soul, he is intellectually in the same boat as the man who is dogmatically certain of its immortality. Hence, it seems to me to be well—from a scientific point of view—to keep an open mind on the subject. After all, the immortality of the soul is a magnificent conjecture, and magnificent conjectures—the scarcely credible conjecture that men would one day be able to fly, for example—have often turned out to be true. It is a conjecture that has been the inspiration of much of the greatest music, painting and architecture in the world. Einstein regards such a belief as a mark of weakness, but, with Bach and Handel on the other side, this is not conclusive.

I myself believe in immortality even at times when I have no desire to be immortal. Naturally indolent, I have never had any great longing to visit undiscovered countries; and Heaven is the chief of undiscovered countries. The thought of my soul's leaving my body and taking flight at an incredible pace through the air to an unknown destination makes me giddy. There are moments at which I should prefer unending sleep. At the same time I find it difficult to believe that the soul perishes. Mr. Julian Huxley has written admirably on the uniqueness of man among the animals, and it may be that man is unique most of all in the possession of an immortal soul. I agree that this, too, is not easy to believe when one thinks of cannibals or even of some races of civilised men. I have never been able to share the faith of the missionary who holds that the conversion of one savage to Presbyterianism outweighs in importance all the wealth of the world. The difficulties of belief on either side, indeed, are enormous to us intermittent doubting Thomases.

I have met people who maintained that the immortality of the soul had been proved already. They have told of conversations with the dead, the record of which sounded as true as any evidence one has ever heard in a law-court. I believe their stories with half my imagination as I listen to them, but disbelieve them with half my brain when I have left them. It is odd how reluctant one is to believe in ghosts if one has never seen one or talked to one. And, even when we believe in ghosts, most of us explain them away as natural, not supernatural, phenomena. I confess I felt nervously credulous at a Spiritualist seance when a ghostly voice, professing to be that of an old schoolfellow, addressed me huskily in the darkness. But this ghost was a fraud—answering "yes" when I gave him a lead, and merely making inarticulate noises when he did not know the answers to my questions—so that I have had no reason from personal experience to believe in ghosts, and my knowledge of them comes only from books and from my friends. Probably if I were in the witness-box and were asked, "Do you believe in ghosts?" I should answer "Yes." But it would be a dubious and wavering "Yes." And, anyhow, the existence of ghosts does not seem to me to be the most convincing argument on behalf of the ancient theory—that man possesses an immortal spirit.

The most valid reason for believing in immortality—apart from religious faith—seems to me to be that so many good men—seers with the profoundest insight—have believed in it. Perhaps the present phase of doubt is only temporary, and the young may live to see a world in which a majority of men and women subjected to a questionnaire will be as confident in their belief in life beyond life as their grandfathers were. It would be interesting to return to earth thirty years hence and find out.

Y.Y.

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

SZOSTAKOVICZ's seventh, and most recent, symphony was broadcast by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood on the anniversary of Germany's attack on Russia. It is sub-titled "Leningrad," and was conceived by the composer while fire-watching through the winter of 1941-42. In every sense a large work, it lasts 70 minutes in its present form and employs a Mahlerian orchestra, including two sets of tympani and eight percussion players.

The symphony goes back to Berlioz for its form, by-passing Strauss and Liszt on the way. The programme is, briefly, the contrast between the "freely developing" life of Soviet citizens and the rigid, monotonous stasis represented by the Nazi conception. This contrast is achieved, in the first movement, by a kind of triptych, the left and right panels of which consist of a long winding C major melody, of considerable idyllic beauty, while the centre panel contains an immense crescendo (at least 12 minutes long), achieved by the method of Ravel's Boléro. This surprising passage manages to avoid anti-climax by a sudden clever change of key (E flat to A) at the peak; but even so it is hard to imagine that one could listen to this huge stationary sequence without impatience, once one knew what was going to happen; no future performance need be expected to reveal anything new here. "Who drives fat oxen . . ." is not a method applicable to art. If the symphony is to attain popularity, this passage and the subsequent bridge to the recapitulation will have to be rewritten and telescoped.

The Scherzo ("Memories") is a charming movement, full of French influence, and with a fine imaginative coda, but disfigured by some hideously perverse writing for the clarinets, which are made to squeal about in a register reserved for the flutes.

The Largo, a noble elegy for the fallen, is, I seem to feel, the best of the four movements. Here the composer tests his ability to write music that will stand on its own legs; and though the result is, again, tryingly lengthy, there is no denying the sweep and profundity of the music. The Finale, too, though it seems a mistake to have repeated here the mood of the Largo, has a visionary quality that is very arresting, and it works up to a glittering triumph at the end.

From this perfunctory description it should be obvious that the symphony, as a whole, suffers from diffuseness as much as from the desire to embody a stirring message. Yet it would be idle, as well as ungenerous, to deny that it is a noble and thrilling conception—as such no doubt its composer's finest work to date. That it cannot be said to succeed as a whole is, I think, due to the "romantic" nature of Szostakovicz's attitude to his art. It was, I suppose, Schubert who invented the method of improvising with given material until he stumbled on something that would carry him a step further, and so on. Such a technique should be kept for the study, but Szostakovicz here employs it in public. Thus we get many sudden intimations of beauty in embryo, but few which grow to full stature. Also one cannot help feeling that this composer ought by now to have assimilated the many influences he has felt, and brought out of them a consistently individual synthesis. But no; there they are still—laid end to end: Beethoven (string recitative from the ninth Symphony at opening of Largo), Berlioz, Rimsky (general mechanics of composition), Mahler (melodic shapes, form, emotional colour), Poulenc—even Busoni (in the Largo). The aggregate is heterogeneous, too thick and monotonous in texture. Distributing its force equally along an immense front, it fails to concentrate its attack on a single point. A work of art should subjugate artfully, like a lover; not crush and smother clumsily, like a murderer.

All the same, here is a work that is unquestionably impressive and exciting. We shall want to hear it again—but cut, *drastically* cut, by something like a quarter of an hour.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE HAY HARVEST

It smells of hay across the field,
  And, singing as they go,
The women toss the heavy yield
  And spread it row by row.

While yonder, where the hay is dry,
  Each man his forkful throws,
Until the waggon loaded high
  Is like a house that grows.

The poor old horse who holds the cart
  Stands rooted in the heat,
With sagging knees and ears apart
  Asleep upon his feet.

But little Jutschka speeds away
  In barking brave commotion,
To dip and flounder in the hay,
  As in a grassy ocean.

MAIKOV

(*Translated by Frances Cornford*)

THE MOVIES

"The Courtship of Andy Hardy" at the Empire
"The Bride Came C.O.D." and
"Gay Parisienne" at the Warner

Americans sometimes complain that they are grossly misjudged in foreign countries—and so, indeed, they are. But for this Hollywood is chiefly to blame. The film magnates have made great fortunes by spreading over the globe an account of American civilisation that Goebbels himself could hardly have made more insulting. I am not referring to such films as *Citizen Kane* and *Roxie Hart*: satire is a token of health. But most American films present complacently a society of which ostentation is the ruling passion, and in which men are valued according to their puerile toughness, women according to their power of exciting lust. Could calumny be carried further? The immense merit of the Andy Hardy films is their description, slightly sweetened no doubt, but fundamentally accurate, of a middling American family. The aristocrat and the communist can easily criticise this form of bourgeois society. The Hardy world is blatantly philistine—characteristically in the latest instalment a taste for operatic music is assumed to be a sign of morbidity; there is also an immense deference to the conventions, a quite uncritical attitude to the bases of bourgeois society, and a blissful ignorance of the rest of the world. Money, on the other hand, is treated as a worry, not as an aim; tolerance and kindliness in general are accepted as the major virtues; and a remedy for most troubles is a sense of humour—in itself a civilised expression of fortitude and self-control. In fact, despite superficial differences, this society is remarkably like its equivalent in this island. While New York and Hollywood, overrun by predatory types untouched by the Puritan tradition, are alien to us, the Hardys feel as we feel, and belong to the same "culture" (I speak anthropologically) as ourselves. There can be no better propaganda for Anglo-American understanding than these brilliantly executed films.

The Bride Came C.O.D. brings us two of the best actresses in Hollywood, but they get little chance in a story that is a series of dreary clichés. Mr. Cagney once again is the nice cocky type of mechanic, Miss Bette Davies is the spoilt heiress. A worse actress might have made more sense of the story, since Miss Davies draws such a vindictive picture that the "happy ending" is anything but happy. For what has Mr. Cagney done to deserve marriage with so silly a harridan?

Exciting as it is once more to see Massine dance, the film of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo in the Offenbach *Gaîté Parisienne* (renamed *Gay Parisienne*) is welcome chiefly as an experiment. The technique for filming ballet has not yet been found; the stage seems so small that the corps de ballet are crowded like sardines; and the camera cannot focus simultaneously on the front and back of the set. In this film, moreover, technicolor falsifies the colour values, so that only the most brilliant catch the eye; and the sound-track is hideously brassy. What delight it will be, however, when the difficulties are solved and a ballet can be adequately given on the screen.

ROGER MARVELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Rain," at the St. Martin's

This production is full of atmosphere. Tension in the audience is increased by the patter of the rain, which eases from time to time and then comes in greater torrents, and the distant beat of the native drums; one awaits the mosquito bite in a humid tropical heat. Against this background the principal characters play their parts with great skill. They have set the pace and those in the smaller parts are determined to keep in step. Wanda Rotha, whether the wanton, the tiger-cat or the penitent, is an outstanding success as Sadie Thompson. Her performance throughout shows once again that here is a very gifted actress, and her portrayal of the repentant sinner, in the third act, rather in the manner of a sleepwalker is one of the best things in the play. G. H. Mulcaster as the Rev. Alfred Davidson is good, but he would be better if he dominated Sadie spiritually more than he does. He has physical attraction, but if he gave more display of the fanatical zeal of the evangelist one could understand better his hypnotic influence on Sadie. His wife, as played by Margaret Withers, could not be better; she fulfils all ideas of the repressed wife, in spiritual union only with her husband. Dr. MacPhail and his wife are a cosy couple, giving a rather suburban air to the hotel living-room. Joe Horn is another part well played. Fred Groves puts over with great ease the indolent, at times besotted but always philosophic, trader. The play is billed as Somerset Maugham's *Rain*. This seems rather hard not only on those who have dramatised the story, but also on Mr. Maugham, who would have made an even better job of this play.

Correspondence

ANGLO-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP

SIR,—The attitude of friends of the Soviet Union is more intelligent than Miss Macaulay is prepared to allow. To make this clear, may I shortly state the steps by which I, a former enemy of the Soviets, became their friend? My progress is probably typical.

For nearly forty years I have regarded Socialism as the one hope of humanity. (See Marx; or, for those to whom Marx is a red rag, see Fabian Essays.) At first, the obvious course for any who took this view was to support the Labour Party. I did so, until the events of 1931 proved that the bankers and big business had the power to destroy even a mild reformist Labour Government such as that of 1929–1931. It was then evident that Socialism could be introduced by no Government that was not ready to take virtually revolutionary action against the capitalists. This ruled out the Labour Party under its existing leadership.

There was one Government in the world which *had* taken such action and *had* introduced Socialism—that of the U.S.S.R. For those who regarded Socialism as the one hope of mankind, there was thenceforth only one course left—to support, through good and evil report, the one Socialist State. This does not mean that Stalin is "infallible." It *does* mean that he is less likely to be wrong about the interests of the Socialist State than you or I are. There is, of course, a case against the U.S.S.R. It is the case against Socialism. But we leave it to the enemies of Socialism to state it.

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

SIR,—Miss Rathbone's letter was on slightly better terms with reality than either Miss Macaulay's or Mr. Inkpen's, both of which reminded one of barrage balloons circling in an interesting but airy manner at a great distance from solid ground.

The real conditions which control the English people's attitude towards Russia have always been ignored by those who debated about Russia in public, because the debaters have not been interested so much in Russia and its people for their own sake, as in their political system and social ideals. This is a reasonable outlook, but it has led them in their enthusiasm to the superficial belief that they would be able to persuade people to approve of that system and ideals by boosting up the Russian people themselves, and then to say that the system and ideals must be good because the fine Russians are living by them. Obviously for this purpose, the less the English really know about the Russian people the better.

That method, however, is a lazy short-cut which turns out at the end to be a cul-de-sac; anyone who has tried to interest people in Russia knows the irritated reaction. . . . "Oh, those wonderful Russians! Don't we ever do anything good?" Or: "You can say what you like about Stalin . . . I'd rather have Churchill any day!"

Those who are really determined that Socialist ideals and our friendship with Russia are both of supreme importance to our future world realise two things . . . first, that Socialist ideals should stand on their own feet as a worthy goal for our English civilisation, and, second, that the attempt to use the amazing transformation of the Russian society by means of those ideals, as an argument in favour of the ideals, must be prefaced by a real understanding of the Russians. The mind of the British people is quite intelligent enough to reject any dishonest or impatient short-cuts.

R. B. Kemball-Cook

ANTI-SEMITISM

Sir,—Unfortunately for Mr. Slater's suggestion "dispassionate research" into anti-Semitism seems to be an impossibility. I have no doubt that Mr. Slater imagines that he is actuated by the most benevolent feelings towards Jews; nevertheless one can faintly discern one of those thin scatterings of anti-Semitic seeds in his own communication. I need only instance his sympathetic suggestion that one reason for anti-Semitism is that ancient proscription of certain foods "which now lack all rational basis" are still maintained. May I point out that something approximating to the Jewish dietary is still frequently prescribed by doctors as a health regimen!

Apart from this incidental recommendation, it must be obvious that the Jewish superstition, like all other superstitions, demands faith above all from its followers, and faith transcends reason. These dietary peculiarities are paralleled by many others in other beliefs, none of which could be rationally defended. The intoning of prayers in Latin, totally incomprehensible to nine-tenths of an average Catholic congregation, is one. Followers of the Catholic superstition see nothing irrational in this. Total immersion by one sect; baptism by sprinkling "holy" water; the "English Sunday"; that "holy matrimony" which compels two people who loathe each other to live in the same house, even in the same room—one could multiply instances of irrationality in and out of religion. Why, therefore, pick on the Jewish dietary laws, which originally, at any rate, had a rational basis? One cannot say as much for some other irrationalities. The extraordinary twist given to the Christian religions by certain correspondents in our more important dailies; for example, those "logical" arguments for the Christ-like spirit of "retribution"—a *much* more elegant word than "revenge"—where are their rational bases?

The Jews are set apart, not by their own desire but *fear* of their neighbours. Again and again they have experienced the apparent security of equality, of friendship, and they have reciprocated handsomely. Nobody who knows Jews needs to be told of their charity, their hospitality, their sympathy. But again and again through the centuries this facade of equality has been torn down, and their efforts at rebuilding their shattered worlds have been wiped out with brutality and scorn. So that in every Jew there is—how can he help it?—a wariness, a withholding of complete trust; and it is for this reason that he turns in confidence to his fellow-Jew; fellows in eternal misfortune. Would it were otherwise!

Russia was once the centre of the anti-Semitic world, yet in Communist Russia anti-Semitism seems to have been eradicated. In that new world Man is judged by what he can do, not by what he was born, and his idiosyncrasies of belief or unbelief do not seem to affect that ultimate judgment. Maybe a little dispassionate research in that direction might be of some use!

Jean Delin

NEW TOWNS

Sir,—The article published in your issue of June 20th, entitled "New Towns and War Industries" raises a question of great importance, and its main argument in favour of large-scale reconstruction on a national basis is entirely convincing.

If the land of Great Britain as a whole is to be used to the best advantage, there should certainly be a major redistribution of population. Such a movement should be of two kinds—urban *decentralisation* so that London and the large provincial towns may be relieved of congestion, and urban *centralisation* by which several hundred thousand buildings scattered over the landscape and impeding the operations of agriculture would be demolished and their occupants rehoused in compact townships. Whether some of such townships could suitably be built around the sites of decentralised groups of war industries is a question which demands full consideration. Unfortunately, however, the sites for these war industries were, of necessity, hastily chosen without an opportunity being given to take into account *all* the factors which should determine the best positions for new towns. Thus it might prove to be advantageous to put the majority of these towns elsewhere.

The writer of the article mentions a new factory in or near a South Wales town, and he refers to the proposal of Political and Economic Planning some years ago that this town, being a distressed area, should be "re-sited." But to denude of its 70,000 inhabitants a town such as this, very attractively situated and with housing and other social services provided at great cost and to re-establish the whole community around the ordnance factory some miles away, thereby, incidentally, diverting from its proper agricultural use a large chunk of what happens to be without doubt the very best land in the whole county, does not seem to be a reasonable suggestion! It would surely be preferable after the war to remove the ordnance factory, adapted to peace-time uses, to the original town.

A. Trystan Edwards

The Hundred New Towns Association,
32 Queen's Avenue, London, N.10.

PENNY-WISE

Sir,—"Penny-wise, pound foolish" characterises the treatment meted out by the War Office to its unfortunate victims.

In January, 1941, a panel patient of mine, a most charming girl, married a soldier who had been in the army seven years, five of them in India. In October, 1941, he developed *lymphatic leukaemia*, of which he died in a military hospital in January, 1942, a month after the birth of his son. The Ministry of Pensions refuses any payment whatever to the widow or child, shirking responsibility by stating that the disease was not a direct result of Military service. This is a rare disease of unknown cause, so whether it was or not might be argued until the baby is grown up.

The Ministry say the mother must take a job, but the baby is on the breast and doing splendidly—so what? Do we support thousands of health visitors to persuade mothers to breast-feed their babies just for a whim, or is it important for the future health of our people? Meanwhile, the mother and baby have to live on the meagre earnings of the baby's grandmother, herself a widow, a dressmaker.

Is this democracy? The U.S.S.R. manage things better; even the Nazis subsidise motherhood.

A Country Doctor

EXCHANGE OF POPULATIONS

Sir,—Miss Freda White, in her article, "Colonial Outlook: Unsettled," strays for a moment from the subject on which she is a recognised authority, to aim a side-slap at people "who urge exchange of populations in Europe, because they want this Nazi device of expropriation and expulsion to be accepted and applied to the peoples of Palestine and Kenya." The minds of persons choosing such roundabout paths would be so ingeniously silly and crooked that their opinions on this serious question would not deserve consideration. But Miss White's conception seems so far-fetched as to raise the uneasy feeling which one experiences when encountering an *idée fixe*. If, however, Miss White wants to enter the arena as a combatant against the principle of population transfers, the question can be discussed.

Every continent suffers from its own diseases and has its particular difficulties, and no cure is necessarily suited for universal application. The same may be said of individual countries. The problem of Minorities is acute in Europe everywhere from Petsamo to Crete, and from Vienna to Minsk. It had, to say the least, much to do with the last, and the present, war. It must be resolutely tackled by the United Nations if it is not to be the starting point of future wars. So far only two solutions appear

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JONATHAN CAPE

possible—not contradictory of one another, but capable of being applied in conjunction. One is some form of international protection of Minorities by agreement. The other is exchanges, or transfers, of populations. Both bristle with difficulties. As regards exchanges, in every mixed area the pros and cons of transfer will have to be considered separately, so great will be the variety in conditions and in the prospects of a successful sorting out. Although the process involves individual suffering—especially, I fear, to old people—this can be softened by economic planning and humane arrangements. " Nazi methods of expropriation and expulsion " are abhorrent to everyone in this country. The idea of transfer did not originate with the Nazis. It has been carried out under the aegis of the League of Nations, and it is a dangerous device to try to discredit measures by confusing their use and abuse. It is hard for most of us here to realise what it means to live in countries where (to quote a phrase from Rebecca West's magnificent book on Jugoslavia) " hatreds are like poppies among the corn." But if the British people are to pull their weight in the peace settlement of fevered Europe we must look at facts as they are. It would be a poor beginning to impute motives to everyone who has the misfortune not to agree with our view.

BLANCHE E. C. DUGDALE

[Miss White writes :—

Exchange of populations is in fact advocated by people anxious to rescue the Jews from conditions in Central Europe which seem unlikely ever to offer them reasonable security. Individual Zionists frequently go on to say that room for the Jews must be made by expelling the Arabs of Palestine : they cite the Peel Report in support of their claim. The Greco-Turkish exchange was the main operation which, after the violent expulsion of the Greeks was taken on by the League. They were saved from utter catastrophe, but the death, misery, and permanent loss to Near East civilisation which were entailed are past computation.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

" THE FOOL'S PROGRESS "

SIR,—After having recently been honoured by an attack delivered by Mr. Kingsmill through private channels and of a violence which surprised even someone who, like myself, is used to the many poisoned arrows shot by our valiant defenders of German intellectual genius, I was sorry to see that your valuable space should have been wasted for the repetition of an attack, in the course of which a defender of Britain is implicitly accused of not being an even stronger defender of Germany, or, rather, the German mind, symbolised in this particular case by the name Keyserling.

When Mr. Kingsmill accuses me of plagiarising Keyserling, and thus continues his subtle defence of German intellectual superiority, it is my duty to enlighten him that Keyserling's *Spektrum Europas* has not crossed my path since I first read it almost twenty years ago. When Mr. Kingsmill, to discredit me, mentions that I " bracket " Keyserling with Ribbentrop, he deliberately omits to state that I bracketed him also with Spengler, and that I contrasted his opinions with those of such men as Emerson, Santayana and Madariaga.

Mr. Kingsmill's accusation that in dealing with the Briton's " instinct," " hypocrisy " and " talking of the weather " I plagiarised Keyserling, reveals the same intellectual perspicacity that would be needed to accuse the man who says " the grass in England is green " of plagiarising this or that author. Surely, the above examples are so commonplace that they do not require the detecting individual genius of Keyserling or—myself. It did not occur to me in making the relevant statements to claim any particular originality.

If Mr. Kingsmill had been as honest in his treatment of myself as I tried to be in my treatment of the problem of Britain, he might have felt moved to mention that in *Fool's Progress* I have deliberately concentrated on " John Smith's " virtues as they strike foreigners—he never even suggests that the book is chiefly a record of the experiences of foreigners in this country, i.e., Polish pilots.

ROM LANDAU

THE JAPANESE SWORD

SIR,—The reference to the Japanese sword in Mr. Harrison's recent article called to mind some curious facts that came to the writer's notice in 1940. The Japanese sword has been called the Soul of the Samaurai (the military caste), and it might be said to have a wider significance as the symbol of the national spirit of Japan.

For years now the old swords have been collected assiduously by the Japanese and one well-known buyer in London represented the Imperial Government, but this only applied to good early examples. The Caledonian Market and the junk shops of London were full of poor-quality, dilapidated examples, which were rubbish and nothing more.

In June, 1940, a collector required some such " scrap heap " swords for constructional investigation. He, therefore, went to various junk shops where he had known of swords, hanging dust-covered in the windows, for years. At the first port of call the four old friends, he was told, were sold, and said the dealer, " To a Japanese gentleman." With the mental reservation that the " Japanese gentleman " must have been either mad or drunker than any Japanese have been known to be, the collector proceeded to the next junk man. Again no swords, but only the trail of the Japanese scrap-metal buyer. And so it went on—always " the Japanese gentleman " ; nor was he the same one, sometimes fat, sometimes thin, sometimes he was even called " A Chink bloke."

A well-known dealer in things Japanese in Bloomsbury was visited on the chance that he had some scrap swords. He had had, ones which he rightly considered of no value and had kept in his basement. A young Japanese had bought them—eight, he said—" who didn't know much ! "

At the biggest dealer in Japanese works of art, who in normal times would have 50 to 200 swords in stock, two poor-quality ceremonial dirks were available. All others had returned to Japan, and would return, for every week Japanese came in asking for swords, good and bad alike.

These incidents may sound trivial, but as a sign of the revival of the national fighting spirit they are not without interest. During the Russo-Japanese war, the family blades which had been handed down as heirlooms were mounted in the conventional naval and military hilts of modern times. Now, apparently, not only have the old blades been again taken from their shirazaya (whitewood storing scabbards) and mounted for war, but they are now mounted with the traditional cord-bound two-handed grips of the pre-Meiji (Enlightenment !) era.

POSTSCRIPT.—On February 16th (Singapore was falling !) a fine early sword was sold in Glendinning's auction rooms. The successful bidder was a Japanese.

England is indeed a free country.

CLEMENT MILWARD

STAR-DUST

SIR,—Tom Harrisson's article on Star-Dust proves conclusively that " mass-astrology " and morale are one and the same thing. How else could complacency endure to-day ? I suggest that the Ministry of Information immediately set up a Directorate of Astrology. Under the wizard supervision of Brendan Bracken the new D.A. would issue daily communiques on the astral background of military defeats which would increase public confidence in victory, whatever happened. The B.B.C. might also match its Brains Trust with an Astral Circle. Professor Joad, who has already reached " star " class in mundane broadcasts, would rise to dizzier heights if he were allowed to preside as St. Cyril over a magic circle of Archidami Naylors, Lyndoes and Maritzas. The Ministry of Information must not neglect these stellar stimulants of the national morale. A Director of Astrology at £2,000 a year and a couple of Stellar Relations Officers at £1,000 a year would be a cheap price to pay for success in the M.O.I. campaigns of propaganda.

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HAMISH HAMILTON

BOOKS IN GENERAL

If I had met Dr. Johnson, I should not, I fear, have had the sense to like him. (Doubtless he would have liked me even less.) Even if I had preserved myself by silence from one of his monumental snubs, I should have complained that he was overbearing, reactionary, bigoted, and grossly insular. When Boswell took issue with him, Johnson, one notices, was in the wrong nine times out of ten. Moreover, whenever you were getting the better of him in an argument, he resorted—unless you happened to be a Bishop—to a schoolboy rudeness. It would have been small consolation to be told of his divine kindness to poor Mrs. Desmoulins, to the uncouth Levett, to blind, peevish Mrs. Williams, to his negro servant, and to Hodge, his cat. "We are told," he once pronounced, "that the black bear is innocent; but I should not like to trust myself with him." Whereupon Boswell heard Gibbon mutter "I should not like to trust myself with *you*." Horace Walpole declared that Johnson's manners were sordid, supercilious and brutal: "with all the pedantry, he had all the gigantic littleness of a country schoolmaster." Though I hope I might have listened with more amusement and less disgust, I cannot flatter myself that I should have been more acute than Horace Walpole and Gibbon. But the dead are the most unexacting of friends—they can never be sulky or rude to you, or even unpunctual. And now that he is as safely separated from me as are the bears on the Mappin Terraces, with a fosse of a hundred and seventy years between us, there is nobody I frequent with more delight than Dr. Johnson, and Boswell's *Life* is my favourite book in English prose.

He is at least as witty as he is wrong-headed—who ever said so many good things? One hears the deep bow-wow of his voice emerging in an eruption of granite from the great bent convulsive frame. A scintillation of fancy plays among the lapidary phrases. His character, more vivid even than that of Falstaff or Charlus (who similarly are better to read about that they would have been to meet), lends interest to his most casual comment. How exciting therefore to be presented at this time of day, in the newly printed *Thraliana* (edited by K. C. Balderston, Oxford Press, 42*s*.), with important new material about him.

Mrs. Piozzi used these notes in her commonplace-book as a basis for her admirable *Anecdotes*. Boswell, as jealous as any favourite of the Grand Turk, accused her of "extreme inaccuracy," but in composing his own masterpiece he seems to have been no more punctilious. He attributes moreover to Johnson a number of disobliging remarks about Mrs. Thrale; and, as Professor Balderston points out, the Boswell Papers from Malahide Castle offer no authentication for any one of these passages. (They may, however, be true—most of us say things about our friends that we should be sorry to see recorded.) The editor of *Thraliana*, who has taken immense care to collate all the parallel passages, concludes that Mrs. Piozzi took considerable liberties with the material to give coherence to her narrative, to heighten his wit and to vindicate his judgment. She has been accused of emphasising his acerbities to exalt her own patience and to justify her break with him. But her diary now reveals how much that was disobliging she was careful to suppress.

In *Thraliana* we watch the fullness and the decline of a close and noble friendship. Johnson gave Mrs. Thrale the chance to be a literary hostess by bringing to her house at Streatham his friends Reynolds, Goldsmith, Baretti and Burke. She did more for him. She was constantly affectionate, putting up gaily with his melancholy, his bursts of temper, the nastiness of his personal habits. An adoring mistress could not have been more patient: she consoled, she enlivened, she listened. To her—and so far as we know to her alone—he made a terrible confidence. "Our stern Philosopher Johnson trusted me about the year 1767 or 1768—I know not which just now—with a secret far dearer to him than his life." Neither her quarrel with him nor Boswell's jibes tempted her to reveal this "dreadful secret." The only hint in the *Anecdotes* is one sentence: "He often lamented to us the horrible condition of his mind, which he said was nearly distracted." Even in *Thraliana* she was careful to say little. But she said enough.

> How many times has this great, this formidable Dr. Johnson kissed my hand, aye, and my foot too, upon his knees. Strange connections there are in this odd world!

In the margin she added:

> A dreadful and little suspected Reason for *ours*, God knows—but the Fetters & Padlocks will tell Posterity the Truth.

An entry dated 1771 in Johnson's still unpublished Pocket Diary helps to confirm this extraordinary revelation: "De pedicis et manicis insana cogitatio" (Mad thoughts about fetters and handcuffs). It seems even that she may have been speaking literally when she wrote to him, "Do not quarrel with your Governess for not using the Rod enough." For flogging was then an accepted remedy for madness, which was applied to George III. "I don't believe," she notes in 1788, "the King has ever been much worse than poor Dr. Johnson was, when he fancied that eating an apple would make him drunk." Thus at last is the "dreadful secret" discovered that has excited so many conjectures. For some good reason Dr. L. F. Powell, in his Oxford Press edition of the Birkbeck Hill Boswell, discussed the "secret" without referring to this revelation in *Thraliana*, although he had read the manuscript. But I am persuaded that Mrs. Thrale was speaking the truth.

Johnson, she notes in 1774, is "more a Hero to me than to anyone—and I have been more to him for Intimacy, than ever any Man's Valet de Chambre." He lives most of the time in her house, he is taken by the Thrales to Paris, and—such is her preoccupation with him—when recording the largest ivy she has ever seen (it was at Carnarvon Castle) she adds "It measures as thick in Timber as Mr. Johnson's Thigh." She thought Boswell and Burney the only other friends who much loved him; and "as to Burney, had they been much together, they would have liked each other less." She was careful, she explains, to keep those parts of their characters out of sight which would have caused offence; "and this was made easier by Johnson's weakness of sight and hearing." She was a born hostess.

Mrs. Thrale refers to the "faeculancies of his low Birth,"—it was painful to watch his gross eating—and adds "no flattery was so welcome to him as that which told him he had the Mind and Manners of a *Gentleman*, which he always said was the most complete & the most difficult to obtain." A pleasanter picture is of Johnson, at the age of seventy, when an invasion was feared, boasting how he'd fight the French if they came. And then there are lively accounts of the parlour-games at Streatham. They played at changing places with people. Johnson said he would change with nobody but Hugo Grotius; Burney wished rather to be Metastasio, Boswell wished to be Shakespeare, Mr. Thrale desired only to be himself. (Mrs. Thrale, who is always surprising us, wished to be Fénelon.) The Marking Game was also played, and Mrs. Thrale gave Johnson 20 (full marks) for both Religion and Morality, 19 for Scholarship, 20 for General Knowledge, 0 for Person and Voice, 0 for Manner, 15 for Wit, 16 for Humour and 0 for Good Humour. (She gave herself 17 for Worth of Heart and for Conversational Powers, but only 10 for Person, Mien and Manner, and for Good Humour.) Then they played at Analogies. Johnson, being compared to a Haunch of Venison, retorted that Mr. Thrale was Roast Beef, Mrs. Thrale a Gallina (guinea-fowl) and Fanny Burney a Woodcock. This leads to an anecdote I believe to be new. On one occasion Mrs. Thrale said to Garrick about his home at Lichfield, where he and Johnson were born, "No town ever produced two such men," to which the actor riposted "I am only the Gizzard, Madam, trussed under the Turkey's Wing." On another occasion there is talk of Burke and Fox: "The first has more bullion," Dr. Johnson pronounces, "But the other coins faster." Mrs. Thrale adds that the same might be said of Mrs. Montagu and herself. So vivid is one's sense of Johnson's character that even the slightest anecdotes are fascinating.

> Dr. Johnson told me that at a Friend's house he had been one Evening talking over some Theological Subjects—the Room was full—a Young Lady said to him: Now pray dear Sir tell us what that Circumcision [is] we so read of—Ask your Mama to-morrow Miss said he.

One sees the ladies tittering behind their fans, the men trying to keep straight faces, everyone wondering how the sage would extricate himself; and before the Young Lady has time to realise her *gaffe*, he makes the answer that seems obvious—but which only uncommon sense and the tact of a kind heart could in such embarrassing circumstances thus promptly dictate.

In 1779 the friendship was at its zenith. Johnson pronounced such a eulogium upon his hostess that she sat and cried almost at the hearing of it: "To be so loved by such a Man!—who can wonder that my head is turned with Vanity?" Three years later, the shadows were already long:

> I begin to see (now everything shews it) that Johnson's Connection with me is merely an interested one—he *loved* Mr. Thrale I believe, but only wish'd to find in me a careful Nurse & humble Friend for his sick and his lounging hours: yet I really thought he could not have existed without *my Conversation* forsooth. He cares more for my roast Beef & plumb Pudden which he now devours too dirtily for endurance: and since he is glad to get rid of me, I'm sure I have good Cause to desire the getting Rid of him.

She was intending to take her family abroad for three years to economise, and Johnson, always hostile to the then so fashionable display of sensibility, had shown little concern at the news. Such was the occasion for this outburst, but its causes were far deeper. Thrale had died the previous year. ("After the Denunciation of your Physicians this Morning," Johnson warned him, "such eating is little better than Suicide.") But, as she very well knew, it was to see Mrs. Thrale, not her dreary husband, that the Doctor came to Streatham. The trouble was that she felt younger every day, being already in love with Piozzi; Johnson, on the other hand, was growing older rapidly, and more difficult. The break did not come till her marriage in 1784, but she saw less and less of her old friend. She was indeed ill, so ill with frustrated love that her daughters feared for her life and assented to the recall of Piozzi as the only remedy. But she dared not confide to Johnson the cause of her malady, and he suffered silently from her neglect. When, therefore, she wrote to announce her marriage, he forgot all her kindness and sent her a letter of inexcusable brutality. Her trenchant and dignified reply brought him to his senses; kinder letters were exchanged; but they never met again. Five months after her marriage, Johnson died; and it is likely that the quarrel precipitated his end. Mrs. Thrale was enjoying a prolonged honeymoon in Italy, and thinking of translating his *Lives of the Poets* into Italian. Then came the news of their author's death. "Oh, poor Dr. Johnson!!!" she wrote in *Thraliana*—the three marks of exclamation suggest that for once words failed the most voluble of women. There is a particular sadness in learning that a person whom once you loved is dead: comparing what now you feel with what once you would have felt, you consider how liquid is the personality of man, how fugacious and inconsequent his most profound emotions. But life at Milan was delightful; she scribbled a poem about a "flying Fellow" who ascended in an Air Balloon; there was a dinner and a concert to celebrate Signora Piozzi's birthday—"God has heard my Prayers, and enabled me to make happy the most amiable of his Sex." Besides, this whirligig of a woman was something of an artist, and she began almost at once to prepare a book about Johnson, the *Anecdotes* which are the perennial monument to a very touching friendship.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

SHOT DOWN IN FLAMES

The Last Enemy. By Richard Hillary. *Macmillan. 7s. 6d.*

Mr. Hillary is a good journalist, and his lively book is a self-centred, educated, and rather romantic young man's account of his mind and actions as a fighter pilot. There have been many works on this subject—they begin to be rather boring—but this is an attempt to get a little below the surface, to deal not only with adventure but with its aftermath, and its effects upon a personal philosophy. As Mr. Hillary's philosophy has been a common one for a generation, his story is worth a glance, even if, at the end, he does not take one very far. It begins at Oxford just before the war, comfortable, sporting Oxford with a dash of brains in it. Mr. Hillary found himself in a midway position between the guilty intellectuals of the Chamberlain period who had lost their will, and the buccaneering indifference of the muscular. The only certain thing, as the war grew nearer and eventually broke, was the self. In sport, no need to take training seriously; in intellectual matters no need for any body of belief; one could rely on this self for a gallant, last-minute effort which would surmount any crisis; and after that one could help oneself liberally to the world without compunction or regret. Mr. Hillary was a sort of well-fed anarchist, but an efficient and not a desiccated one. He belonged to that branch of the dying individualist philosophy which believed in aplomb, toughness and self-realisation, and which did not fritter away down the gracious and haunted by-paths of neurosis and eccentricity. If we were going back to the Dark Ages Mr. Hillary was going to be a baron and not a monk.

The outbreak of war was an enormous relief to him and his circle, as it was to many. Mr. Hillary joined the R.A.F. and belonged to that at first despised section called "the long-haired ones," the amateur pilots. His training during the Sitzkrieg was long and rather insubordinate. A good time was had by all and the feeling was that a fighter pilot was engaged in the cleanest kind of warfare, the straightforward knightly single combat of the Middle Ages. You killed, as the anarchists say, without remorse. But, of course, you might not kill and you might be killed. That might happen to your friends but you (as Mr. Hillary discovered) might be wounded and might enter into quite a different kind of drama. He was in fact shot down in flames over the North Sea and floated for hours before he was picked up, badly burned in the face and hands.

The rest of the book describes most interestingly his physical progress under the charge of the skin grafters who gave him new eyelids and a new lip; but also his spiritual progress after a curious dream experience in hospital. In his unit there had been a friend called Peter, a reserved man and professed Christian, who fervently held that [illegible] was not in the war, nor indeed in life, for what he could get out of them either in adventure or self-realisation; but out of duty to mankind and for the extirpation of Evil. He pitied Mr. Hillary's tough philosophy. Mr. Hillary had spent many hours pointing out how delightful it must be for Peter, who was an aristocrat and landowner on a large scale, to hold his simple feudal religious faith. But in the nightmares which he dreamed on his first agonising days in hospital, Mr. Hillary dreamed he saw Peter shot down and killed. The dream turned out to be true. There followed a number of conversations with Peter's fiancée on the subject of death, in which the author attempted and failed to shake her serene faith that Peter was still with her, working for humanity. No (Mr. Hillary argued) each man is an end in himself; if he dies, forget him; that is the end. The girl replied with Donne that something of oneself dies with everyone who dies and said that only our realisation of companionship with the dead could give value to life.

This is, naturally, the shadowy and dubious part of the book because, though evidently sincere, it is inadequate. Although apparently influenced, Mr. Hillary unhappily conveys the impression that he likes the spectacle of himself believing, and not that he believes. I do not think I am unjust in saying that he remains egocentric, busily self-conscious in defiance or remorse. Against this, his own reactions to his operations, to the phases of his cure in all its peculiarity from boredom to hysteria, are interestingly told. He lay quizzically or irritably curious, his lidless eyes wide open day and night for months, while outside the bombs sang down in the blitz. Only once did he wish they'd finish him off. He insulted nurses, argued with doctors and met additional crises—there was a mastoid operation—with extraordinary spirit. Modern surgery dehumanises the patient to such an extent that he can watch himself as if he were a chemical experiment. Suspended above the hospital bed like some horrifying and conscious chrysalis in his mask, his coloured eye-pads, his bandages and his tannic varnish, the burned man hangs waiting to be reborn into a new life. The technical ingenuity, on which modern man relies in life, appears to play the part once taken by moral resources in moments of disaster. A man may be so curious about his own case that curiosity itself may sustain him.

V. S. Pritchett

THE MEANING OF FREEDOM

Freedom: Its Meaning. Edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen. *Allen and Unwin. 16s.*

"The only freedom which deserves the name," says Mill, "is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it." It sounds simple—I mean that what freedom "means" sounds simple, not that the obtaining and preserving of freedom is simple—but the simplicity turns out, alas, to be illusory. For example, there is a large area of social conduct which is ethically neutral in the sense that it does not matter what men do, provided that they all do the same thing and can count on others doing it. It is a matter of ethical indifference whether the traffic goes to the right or to the left, but it is a matter of immense social importance that, if it does go to the right, I should not be allowed to endanger the public safety by insisting upon my inalienable freedom to drive on the left. But does the right to drive on which side of the road one pleases fall into the category of "goods"? If not, what does Mill mean by the "goods" which we should be "free" to pursue? Again, the definition implies a distinction between those actions which affect only ourselves and those whose consequences affect other people. But on examination it turns out that almost every action that a human being living in society can perform has effects upon somebody else: any pursuit of "goods" by anybody must, then, in some degree assist or impede the pursuit of "goods" by others. Again, am I justified in denying to another the "good" I claim for myself, when I know that he will so misuse this "good," that the effect will be to withdraw its enjoyment from me and from everybody else? Am I, for example, as a liberal and a democrat, believing in free speech and tolerance, entitled to deny free speech to those who preach its suppression and withdraw tolerance from those who would advocate intolerance? The truth is that the simplest definition of freedom bristles with problems, which is, I suppose, why almost every one of the nineteen contributors to the present volume suggests a different one. It is an eminent list which includes the names of Dewey, Einstein, Bertrand Russell, Bergson, Whitehead, Laski, Haldane, Macmurray and Maritain. The contributions vary considerably in merit and depth, and I hope that I am not biased by professional partiality when I say that those of the philosophers seem to me to be the best in the collection; better, for example, than those of the scientists—Einstein is superficial—or of the mainly political writers.

Confronted by so many eminent names, to whom does one naturally first turn? My own answer—and I am pleased to find how many of those with whom I have discussed the book give the same—is to Russell. He knows what the problems are, one says to oneself; he won't shirk them and he is bound to be entertaining. One is not disappointed. Take, for example, the problem of how far freedom should be extended to the advocates of its suppression. Russell is one of the few writers who tackle it, and, though he does not solve it, he makes an important distinction. Here, let us suppose, is a democratic government, professing a belief in freedom and equality which is also held by the majority of its citizens. But its professions are not always implemented in practice; it denies freedom, for example, to the Irish and equality to women. Then the Irish and the women are justified in adopting such means as may be forced upon them to secure the aims which the government itself professes—namely, freedom and equality of citizenship. Here, on the other hand, are citizens whose aims are inconsistent with the principle which the government professes and the people as a whole endorses—Fascists, perhaps, who jeer at freedom, deny equality, and would flout the majority and overturn the government which the majority sets up. Of them we are not bound to be tolerant.

Another important point made by Russell is that, once the principle of social control of individual freedom is admitted as necessary to the public good, there is no reason why its application should be confined within the boundaries of the State. But while "Anarchism, however attractive, is rejected as a method of regulating the internal affairs of a State, except by a few idealistic dreamers . . . except by a few idealistic dreamers it is accepted as the only method of regulating international affairs." Again Russell puts clearly a point also made by others, that the problem of freedom, its definition, its justification and its limits cannot be fruitfully discussed in isolation from other problems. Governments oppress when they feel insecure. The security of the government is, therefore, a condition of the freedom of citizens. Security of government depends mainly upon three things: peace, majority consent and economic content. Thus, conditions for the restoration of the freedom of speech which permitted W. S. Gilbert to mock the Army and the Navy with impunity are the retention of democracy, the resumption of economic progress, and release from the fear of war.

Macmurray writes a profound essay in metaphysics. The controversy between freewill and determinism is sterile since both are abstract concepts. Freedom "is a subjective experience rooted in the objective nature of things." It cannot, then, be secured or even defended by political action or economic organisation; it can be achieved only in our own persons by overcoming the will to power over others. Haldane, in a brilliant and at times extremely entertaining, though dated, essay, stresses the social context and economic background of freedom. Even the freedom of the writer and the artist is conditioned by their ability to market their wares. As a good Marxist should, he shows how the concept of freedom changes and grows, and, in growing, negates itself. Thus, "the individual lover of freedom may join an organisation which limits his own choice. Moreover, he is more likely to find himself in prison than the man who always takes his cue from the majority."

Thomas Mann shows that civilisation is in retreat, except apparently in America, which he praises as a country that "knows what is good and what is evil; that despises force and untruth." I suspect that Mann is writing in America. Croce and Whitehead I find difficult to understand, but the book, as a whole, is of first-rate quality and can be confidently recommended.

C. E. M. Joad

THE GERMAN PEOPLE

Last Train from Berlin. By HOWARD K. SMITH. *Cresset Press.* 10s. 6*d.*

Genuine evidence about Germany during the war is as rare as it is valuable. Mr. Smith is very honest about his credentials. He tells us in his two introductory chapters how he went from college in America to Germany and then back to Oxford, where amongst other things he was the first American to be president of the Oxford University Labour Club. He went back to Germany as a newspaper and radio correspondent and remained there until Pearl Harbour brought America into the war against the Axis. He claims, fairly enough, to tell the story that "American correspondents have been trying to tell the world between the lines of their dispatches since last autumn," i.e., since German morale began to show signs of strain as a result of Hitler's failure to win a swift victory over the U.S.S.R. Mr. Smith tells a very lively and human story. He is frank about his own fears and doubts and mistakes; he hates the whole Nazi set-up as a decent man should and he does not pretend that Germany is about to collapse as a result of a revolution, unaided by decisive military victories by the United Nations. But he is encouraging; his facts are facts and not gossip; his generalisations spring, not from theory, but from observation of Germany's internal conflicts for the last six years.

The turning point, in Mr. Smith's view, came in the second week of last October. He describes in detail the events of October 9th when the Russian case looked its worst. A special press conference was called; Dr. Dietrich told the assembled correspondents in Berlin that the war was now, to all intents and purposes, over. He announced, straight from the Führer's own lips the news that "the last remnants of the Red Army" were locked in the steel embrace of Hitler's pincers; they were being finally and mercilessly annihilated before Moscow. The German press was naturally as cheerful as the foreign correspondents were depressed. The annihilation was almost concluded in the headlines of October 12th. But by October 14th operations were merely proceeding "according to plan." This was one of the great propagandist mistakes in history; it was made not by Britain but by the Nazis. Germany had long ceased to believe Dr. Goebbels. But the news of the final defeat of Russia meant to them security, the end of the haunting terror of the revenge of the maltreated Slavs. It was not another victory—there had been plenty of them—that was announced, but "decision"—peace. The disappointment was correspondingly great. When on November 23rd the *Voelkischer Beobachter* announced in a great headline "Rostov taken," no one bought an extra copy of the paper. Christmas was celebrated in disallusion, in shortage and in queues and the newspaper story of the moment was that in order to prepare reprisals against the people of Rostov, Germany's troops had after all evacuated that inhospitable town!

Mr. Smith tells a fascinating story of the duels fought between the Nazi authorities and the American journalists who kept their end up in spite of house searches, arrests, and, most serious, refusal of exit permits. But the main interest of his book lies in his account of ordinary German people. Mr. Smith corroborates every other reliable competent observer when he insists that the people of Germany hate the war, are apathetic about victories and ask only that it should come quickly to an end. In a chapter of unusual interest he describes the unpopularity of the anti-Semitic campaign, and the sympathy shown to the Jews by common people when Goebbels revived this campaign. The climax of a horrible episode when thousands of Jews were carried off to labour camps in Poland was the suicide of Gottschalk, whose immense popularity as an actor was not impaired by his marriage to a Jewess and refusal to divorce her at the order of Goebbels. When as a result of this refusal Gottschalk's wife and child were given a day to pack and join the death procession to the East, Gottschalk shot himself and his wife and child—an act of protest which, according to Mr. Smith, produced devastating results in the film world and destroyed any credit that anywhere remained to the most hated man in Germany. Mr. Smith describes incidents in which he has himself seen workmen deliberately obstructing young Nazis who were persecuting Jews.

Mr. Smith makes no pretence that there is an easy road to social disintegration and revolution in Germany. But he sees broad fissures in the social structure and names three elements of revolt. There are the Communists; he has himself met "hundreds of Communist sympathisers in the years I have spent in Germany. Hundreds are not many in a people of 60,000,000, but it must be borne in mind that I was a foreigner, and only the bold dared to make their faith known, and these only after rather long acquaintance." The mass of the workers remain, he says, in large degree, socialist, and the Communists have an influence far greater than their numbers. He admits, however, that it is disappointing that no acts of sabotage appear to have taken place in German factories, though so many have occurred in occupied countries. Secondly, and for immediate practical purposes more important, is the revolt in the church, especially the Catholic church. Bishop von Galen's declaration of war on the Gestapo in Munster was widely supported; yet Catholics remain unmolested and Von Galen has not been arrested. Thirdly, he cites the army quarrel with the Nazis and gives a variety of examples in which this antagonism has shown itself. The failure to achieve swift victory against the Soviet Union intensified antagonism and led to purges which are potentially dangerous to Hitler. That Hitler fears revolt we know from the steady effort to build up the S.S. into a stronger army dependent on him personally, and the careful storage of arms and the building of strong points to resist a revolt which might come in Nazi Germany from the people just as it came from them in 1919. Only this time, it is to be hoped, the Allies would not be so foolish as to use their power to prevent the revolution which Mr. Smith thinks can be hastened by the right political warfare if disillusion grows and German victory looks more remote.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE CHALLENGE OF THE GREEK

The Challenge of the Greek. By T. R. GLOVER. *Cambridge University Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

There is a legend that the headmaster of a famous public school once said to his sixth form, "Boys, this term you are to have the pleasure of reading the *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles, a veritable treasure-house of grammatical peculiarities." Such was the old spirit of classical education in England, and it deserved all that it got. At one time it seemed likely that the grammarians would so discredit the study of Latin and Greek that they would disappear from our educational system and that our culture would lose a force which has been of incalculable influence for four hundred years. That this did not happen is largely due to those humane and gallant apologists who, like Mr. Glover, read and love the classics because they are great literature and have the gift of communicating their love to others. For many years Mr. Glover has written with insight, wisdom and wit on great figures of

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antiquity, and now he has collected his *obiter scripta* into a book.

The book is not a mere collection, but a real whole, a profession of faith and a personal revelation. Mr. Glover says that he thought of writing an autobiography, but found that this book took its place. The claim is just. The varied contents, ranging from Greek farming to the uses of iced water, from trading settlements to fairy-tales, reveal how much Mr. Glover has found in his studies and how much they mean to him. His first interest, like that of all good scholars, is in great literature. His short chapters on Homer and Virgil, addresses written for special occasions, show how deeply he has absorbed ancient poetry. It provides the centre of his intellectual life, but from it he moves to questions which it raises. He wishes to understand its background, to know the world in which the poets worked, its problems, its daily round. He is no aesthete who enjoys masterpieces in a vacuum, but a student of life who tries to recreate for himself the experience of the great masters.

Particularly striking are the chapters on "Feeding the Athenians" and "The Gastronomers." The first discusses the extremely interesting question of what the Athenians ate, shows how they depended on imported food, and gives many amusing examples of their luxuries and delicacies. The second is an admirable study of Athenaeus' *Gastronomers*, a work which most scholars are content to treat as a repository of useful material. Mr. Glover gives life to it by discussing its real character and the principles on which it is written. He wears his learning lightly, but he deftly introduces much interesting and relevant knowledge and shows a remarkable gift for getting to the heart of a problem. He is a true humanist, who believes that the classics should be studied because they enrich life. His noble *Purpose in Classical Studies* is the best case for a classical education that has been written for many years.

C. M. Bowra

REFLECTIONS ON GOVERNMENT

Reflections on Government. By Ernest Barker. *Oxford University Press.* 21s.

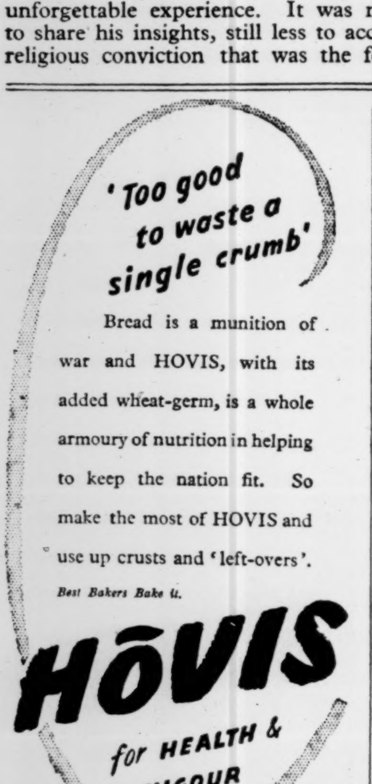
No one who studied history at Oxford in the years before 1914 is likely to underestimate the debt he owes to Professor Barker. Contact with a mind so vigorous and so richly stored was an unforgettable experience. It was not necessary to share his insights, still less to accept the deep religious conviction that was the foundation of his faith, to recognise that here was a great teacher whose method was at once a stimulus and a challenge.

The present book is something in the nature of a testament. There is a sense in which it is the typical book of an Oxford student of political philosophy. It deals with the abstract rather than with the concrete, with concepts rather than with experience. Often notable for a fine aphorism, or for one of those flashes of moral insight which was the legacy of T. H. Green to Oxford, it is still more remarkable for two things. Though it deals with the most passionate of contemporary debates—the future of democracy—it has a curiously remote air, as though the writer himself was aloof from the purpose of the discussion; and it does not reveal the major premiss on which it is itself built, though that premiss involves the vital strategy of its argument. Notable, too, is the fact that though it seeks to assess the meaning and value of democracy in our time, and of the alternatives to it in Russia, Italy, and Germany, the description of their realities has an unearthliness about it, as though the idea of each could be separated, even usefully separated, from what it is as a going concern which gives men life and death. Widely read, obviously deeply moved by what he has read, Professor Barker seems to give his ideas form rather than substance; they wear a ghostly air. His anxiety always is to get away from the thing-in-operation to the thing-in-essence. "Theory," he has elsewhere written, "has to deal with the pure instance, even if practice has to reckon with variations." Professor Barker is always uncomfortable in the market place of variations. He is only really at ease when he has escaped to the heights of the pure instance where, I suspect unconsciously, he can defy the ugliness of stark reality to disturb the joy which comes from a devoted interest in the contemplation of concepts. For the glory of that devotion is that the ardour of its discussion does not need decision and choice as the purpose of its delicate cobwebs.

This is a very long book, and no brief review can do justice to its elaborate, and always interesting, argument. But the reader will find some central clues if he considers the meaning Professor Barker attaches to democracy, his discussion (pp. 108*f*) of capitalist democracy, and his account of the relation of democracy to what (pp. 173*f*) he calls the economic schism, a section in which he denies that there is any such thing as the class war, insists that no Marxist can be a democrat, and denies that there is any real antithesis between a society where the instruments of production are privately, and one in which they are publicly, owned. The conclusions thus reached really provide the criteria on which the whole argument turns.

For Professor Barker democracy is simply government by discussion; it is not government by numbers, though numbers count. It is government by numbers in association with quality, though the method by which quality is assessed remains almost as mysterious as the method by which Rousseau's general will can be discovered. So long as a society is discussing a problem, therefore, it is a democratic society; it ceases to be democratic whenever one section imposes its will on the other section by a procedure to which that section does not consent. It is, of course, perfectly legitimate for Professor Barker to define democracy in this way, if he so desires; the question is whether such a definition is the most helpful available. I do not myself think it is; for by its excessive emphasis on procedures, it omits the historical fact that men have died for those procedures not merely as ends in themselves but as ways to qualities in life that they deemed of great value. A democrat, no doubt, values discussion for its own sake. But it is important, at least to some democrats, that the argument should get somewhere. I suspect that with Professor Barker the goal is less important than the journey. I suspect, too, that it is easier to think so amid the dreaming spires of Oxford or in the loveliness of the Cambridge backs in June than if one is a blacklisted miner in a Welsh coalfield or a share-cropper trying to fix a decent price on his puny holding in Alabama. A democratic state validates its character by the level of the rights that it maintains; and the weakness of Professor Barker's definition is his complete indifference to the fact that the level is urgent. For, in truth, most history is concerned with the struggle to raise that level. This does not seem to me insignificant.

His absorption with the essences of systems has, I think, blinded Professor Barker to the meaning of most of the discussion since Marx's day about the meaning of the class-war. Marxists do not say that there are only two classes in society; what they say is the very different thing that, in the present phase of history, the significant antagonism is between capitalist and proletarian. They say that this antagonism becomes war under the conditions which make it impossible for the premisses of thought and action of one class to become those of another sufficiently to admit of



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a compromise satisfactory to both. Now Professor Barker appears to believe that, at least within national societies, discussion, *i.e.*, democracy, ought always to produce compromise. The answer is that it is only likely to do so in a society where men start from the same premisses, and that in a capitalist democracy whose economy is declining this journey becomes increasingly difficult. No Marxist with whom I am acquainted thinks of the capitalist class as an undifferentiated whole; but he does think that, on the historical evidence, capitalists stand together in grim earnest when it comes to the defence of the key positions on which their privileges depend. It is significant that the reader of these pages will find little to explain why Hitler and Mussolini made their partnerships with big business or why, except on empyrean heights remote from the brutal facts, they acted as the executioners of working-class organisations. The Marxian-democrat (whom in my person Professor Barker so sternly reprimands) if he is guilty of anything is guilty merely of the historic insight that, in almost all vital circumstances, a privileged class will fight for what it believes to be essential rights rather than give way to the claims of a majority; and I should have said that most history since the Reformation supports that view. Professor Barker does not like to face that ugly conclusion. I recognise that its consequences tend to obtrude unpleasant thoughts into the high tower of ivory in which he dwells. But until he has begun to face what, not an evil-minded Marxist, but the sober and benevolent Jeremy Bentham called "sinister interests" and all their implications, he will not really be dwelling in, or writing about, a real world.

The truth is that Professor Barker is upset by a disordered world and he yearns, at any price, for the restoration of a law deeply respected by all men. His pattern of the universe is the unconscious projection from a pleasant common room in an ancient college where, even if the discussion waxes hot, no one is tempted to lay angry hands upon the statutes. But a propertied class which feels itself threatened will obey the injunction of Luther and "stab, strangle and kill without mercy" if it thinks that is the only way to keep its power. I wish Professor Barker would preach the virtues of reasoned discussion to the coal-owners of Great Britain; when he does, I hope he will invite the Miners' Executive afterwards to discuss the results of his attempt. Then I should like him to embark upon a revised edition of his book.

HAROLD J. LASKI

Week-end Competitions

No. 648

Set by Raymond Mortimer

The usual prizes are offered for the best English improved versions of the following stanzas:

Adieu, la vapeur siffle, on active le feu;
Dans la nuit le train passe ou c'est l'ancre qu'on lève;
Qu'importe! on vient, on part: le flot soupire: adieu!
Qu'il arrive du large ou qu'il quitte la grève.

Les roses vont éclore, et nous les cueillerons;
Les feuilles du jardin vont tomber une à une.
Adieu! quand nous naissons, adieu! quand nous mourons;
Et comme le bonheur s'envole l'infortune.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, July 13th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 645

Set by V. S. Pritchett

Going through her husband's diaries, Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne made many deletions in the interests of gentility and propriety; legs became limbs, bellies became rotundities. Usual prizes for the best refined versions for any fifteen lines of vigorous and well-known English verse.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

Her Watch Committee's night out in search of the improprieties of English poetry led Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne to places I am sure she had never visited before in her life. I am sure she never read the last stanzas of *The Miller's Tale*, and goodness knows what she did about Shakespeare. One can see her, of course, getting at "jolly good ale and old" and arriving at something like the version presented by Guy Innes:

Let surfaces go nude, go nude,
Extremities grow cold;
But heaven send thee, rotundity,
Refreshment new or old.

She would also have regularised the seduction scene from *Paradise Lost*, and it would have been easy work for her to have turned the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* into a busy old dear.

I liked Muriel Grant's soldier who sought "ephemeral reputation even at the business end of the cannon." And Mr. Ronald Mason's piece from *Othello*, where Iago cries to Brabantio not that "an old black ram is tupping your white ewe" but "it appears a coloured gentleman is paying court to your daughter." Mr. Allan Laing and Mrs. McLeod both had good shots at Rupert Brooke's disgusting poem *Channel Crossing*.

On the whole, the standard was not very high and I am inclined to divide the prizes between Mr. Kenneth Hamilton, Mr. Allan M. Laing and Mr. Leslie Johnson. I recommend readers to look up the originals. It is an amusing game.

The vessel shook and quivered. Far from slow
My cold throat choked; the long sea rolled; I knew
I must think something hard, or go below;
And could think hard of only one thing—you!
You, you alone could hold me without question,
And with your memories come, sharp pain and dole.
Now there's a choice, heartache or indigestion;
A troubled body or a love-sick soul.
Do I forget you? Pains internal stir me:
No normal nourishment I can retain.
Do I remember? Sad and bitter thoughts deter me,
The sobs and sighing of a last year's pain.
The ship still rolls, 'tis hard when choice is pressed
Twixt love and nausea, heart and lower chest.

ALLAN M. LAING

Lady Macbeth

Come, you spirits,
Make me forget I am a lady still
And fill me top to toe so very full
Of something really bad; increase blood pressure;
Obstruct the approach and roadway to remorse,
That no quite urgent promptings of my conscience
Shake my fell purpose. To my bosom come;
Cancel the order for the infant feed—
Take vinegar instead. Then come thick night
And pall them in the dunnest smoke you can,
That my keen knife see not the hurt it makes,
Or Heaven announce, in spite of all the dark,
"Please, will you stop?"

KENNETH HAMILTON

Nurse: And then my husband for he always was
A kindly man, assisted her to rise.
"Dear me," he said, "I fear you've tumbled down.
When you are bigger, you will take more care,
Will you not, Juliet?" And, on my word,
The pretty dear stopped crying and said "Yes."
She must have been a plucky little girl.
I never shall forget the incident.
"Will you not, Juliet?" my husband asked.
She stopped at once, brave girl, and answered "Yes."
Lady Capulet: That is sufficient, thank you.
That will do.

LESLIE JOHNSON.

COMPANY MEETING

CABLE AND WIRELESS (HOLDING)

THE 13th ordinary general meeting of Cable and Wireless (Holding), Ltd., was held on June 30th in London, the Rt. Hon. Lord Pender, governor and managing director, presiding.

The following are extracts from the statement of the governor circulated with the report and accounts:

A year ago I made reference to the firm prices ruling for high-class stocks and to the rise in British Funds which had then taken place. As a result largely of the Government's financial policy, and with little setback on the receipt of unfavourable war news, this rise has been continued during the past year and has affected favourably most sections of the list of marketable securities.

The book value of our investments at December 31 last was £16,208,058, and the market value was £14,413,180, showing a depreciation of £1,794,878, or 11 per cent., as against a depreciation of 19 per cent. at December 31, 1940. The total investments have been increased by a very substantial amount as a result of further subscriptions to the various new Government issues. About 93 per cent. of the total market value of the investments is represented by securities within the British Empire. Income from the investments received in 1941 amounted to £539,453, compared with £540,234 received in 1940.

It would seem that the future value of all investments must largely depend on the wisdom of those who will be called upon to fashion our post-war economy. It is estimated that the profits retained by subsidiary companies will be sufficient to meet any liability that may arise.

The report was adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

ODHAMS PRESS

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THE twenty-second annual general meeting of Odhams Press, Ltd., was held on June 25th, in London.

LORD SOUTHWOOD OF FERNHURST (chairman and managing director), in the course of his speech, said: You will see that the net profit for the year, after providing for debenture and other interest, amounted to £611,445. The general reserve stands at £630,000, against £560,000 last year. This includes £40,000 reserve from the previous year's accounts and the £30,000 which formerly appeared under the heading development reserve and no longer required for that purpose. You will see from the directors' report that it is proposed to transfer to general reserve £50,000 out of the profits of the year which will bring our general reserve up to the substantial total of £680,000.

The principal item in the profit and loss appropriation is the very heavy reserve for taxation of £313,945, compared with £155,093 last year. This heavy increase in taxation is a measure of the company's contribution to the war effort, which must be cheerfully borne. In order to play our part in assisting the Exchequer during wartime, the directors decided to discharge the greater part of the company's liability for taxation before the due date, which action I am sure the shareholders will approve. After the charges set out in the profit and loss account, there is an available balance of £222,013, which the directors recommend be appropriated in the manner set out.

Since the date of the accounts the directors have invested £200,000 in Government securities.

The directors recommend a dividend on the Ordinary shares at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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